

IS AUSTRIA DOOMED ?

COUNTESS ZANARDI LANDI

**AUTHOR OF
'THE SECRET OF AN EMPRESS'**



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BY
THE COUNTESS ZANARDI LANDI

AUTHOR OF "THE SECRET OF AN EMPRESS"

HODDER AND STOUGHTON

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PREFACE

WHO is it? What is it? Whence does this evil, this destructive power take its origin, this power which makes the Austrians, the Austrians of varying religions, of differing nationalities, the most wronged, the most suppressed nation on earth?

It is a question that cannot be answered in a few words. To get to the bottom of it, one must dissect, one must collect details, one must analyse like the surgeon who probes to the depth of a wound, cutting away the proud flesh; one must go to the very heart of the matter.

The beautiful old house, shaking to its very foundations, yet to be preserved for its fine historical significance—its ancestry, its tradition—must be restored stone by stone. So must we investigate the Austrian question.

Preface

It must be carefully handled lest the house founder in a lamentable heap of ruins. That is the object which I have set before myself in this book.

The moment has come when facts can prove that what I am saying is true. It is not to slur over matters, not to retail gossip that I write this little volume. Always I hold in front of me the conviction that I am speaking in the name of the Austrians—those millions of oppressed ones who, crushed by an invisible power, are not allowed to speak for themselves. They must raise their voices in shouts of enthusiasm while their hearts are heavy with sadness and images of death darken their imagination.

To speak in their name is not only my wish, but my sacred duty, for, unlike them, I enjoy the privilege of living on the sheltering soil where Freedom reigns supreme!

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INTRODUCTION

CAN we really allege that William of Hohenzollern, one man alone, is the cause of this terrific upheaval that has plunged the world into a war which has already lasted two years? Shall we do any single man so much honour as to deem him in possession of such a dominating power that he is able to impose his will, his ideas on a whole nation, and provoke in consequence all the ghastly ferocities which have taken place and are still of almost daily occurrence?

Perhaps it would be nearer the truth if we regarded him as a scourge inflicted on us by a greater Power, a Power but dimly apprehended by humanity. A scourge which was needed in Germany, even more in Austria and in many other parts of this planet, to make an end of institutions, of tendencies

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which had gradually devoured all that is really worth living for, all that is noble and all that stands for real progress—that is, progress in the spiritual part of our existence.

The world which was absorbed in the worship of Mammon had forgotten that any other God existed. The minority who still cared for the higher needs of humanity were laughed at, and the vulture of materialism, improperly called civilisation, was permitted to gnaw at the heart of true national existence everywhere. Nobody can contest this fact ; but at the same time nobody realised that this germ of materialism was imported from Germany, who was busily engaged in dumping it, with her other “ Made in Germany ” goods, into all the markets of the world. Only a terrific upheaval such as we are experiencing now could check the progress of this universal disease ; the surgeon’s knife was needed : it came in the form of a European war, and while materially we are losing daily in blood and wealth, spiritually, to an extent never seen on earth before, we are progressing towards the comprehen-

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sion of the immaterial—towards an ideal of perfection. Dreams that seemed idle before 1914 will be accomplished facts after this war. The improvement of the conditions of humanity, the raising of mankind to a higher plane will result from the terrible ordeal through which we are passing.

And if there were one part of the world which needed so drastic an operation more than any other it was Austria.

During this war Austria has invariably been called the cat's paw of Germany—or rather of Berlin. Now no one can hate Prussia, Prussians, and Prussianism more than I do myself, and millions of Austrians share this aversion with me, but when it comes to a conscientious answer to the question "Is Austria the cat's paw of Germany?" one cannot give an unqualified "Yes." Individuals as well as nations may be used as cat's paws in one transaction, but not for years—not in a succession, a series of negotiations. Why has Belgium not been the cat's paw of Germany? Why not Italy? Why not even Greece?

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Now, Austria, listen to what I am going to say, and take it from me as from one who was reared in Austria, from one who longs to see Austria happy, and from one who has the deepest love for her marvellous people. It is your boundless frivolity, your entire lack of seriousness which has made of you what you are to-day. Were you not so volatile, so lacking in all that would make you realise the significance of life, you would not be in your present position. It was your frivolity that made you endure for so long the yoke of the Hapsburg absolutism, it was your frivolity which has made your Parliament the jest of the whole world, it is your frivolity which has allowed your Government to keep you in a state of constant squabbling over trifles in order that they may gain an advantage over you.

But all is not lost. Free yourselves from the fetters of that power which would keep you in a pleasant ignorance, do not squander your splendid energies any longer over objects which are not really your own, do not permit the interference of outsiders in matters which

concern you alone, unite yourselves again into one force, one power—which can have but one aim and one result, namely, Freedom. Down with the intriguers who constantly succeed in sowing dissension among you! Down with the seducers who lure you into the paths of carelessness and of ease. As a nation you are on the decline, and nothing—nobody—can stop you but yourselves. Refuse to recognise the dominion of selfish rulers. Away with your ingrained sentimentality! Sentimentality is weakness—the result of too much wine, of too much song. The song will make the drunkard weep; tears will come into his sentimental eyes when he hears of the sufferings of others, but he will go home and ill-treat his wife and children a moment after.

The Prussian is a prey to this kind of sentimentality. It is his characteristic—don't mistake it for kindness, for refinement. For it is not. A thin veneer of so-called culture covers the brute in him. Do not mistake this veneer for the real Prussian.

No, the Prussian is innately coarse; but

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you Austrians, your instincts are refined, you are perhaps the most gifted people in the world—the most capable of conceiving all that is really great, all that helps towards the improvement and elevation of mankind. But it is time for you to eschew your national frivolity.

I. THE PARASITES

“S’ist mir allesein, s’ist mir alleseins
Hab’ ich Geld, oder hab ich keins !”

THESE are the first lines of a song attributed to a man known only as “Der liebe Augustin” (“dear Augustine”), who is supposed to have lived during the time of the Plague in Vienna at the end of the seventeenth century. The words are immortal, and the tune to which they are set is well known in every country of the world. Nevertheless, they embody for ever the character of the Austrian as he was then and as he is to-day—always gay at heart, free from care, heedless of the morrow.

The literal translation is “It’s the same to me, it’s the same to me if I have money or if I have none.” And it continues : “If I have money I can go to the theatre, have I none I play the fool at home ; if I have money I can

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eat oysters, if I have none I devour potatoes," and so on.

This ditty provides an answer to the question, "Is the vice of Austria materialism?" In a certain way perhaps the refrain suggests materialism, for at the first glance no idealistic theory of life is contained in the words. But on examining it more closely the song offers consolation for a dearth of material comforts—Death puts everything right in the end, why bother? Such is the attitude of the Austrian to-day. He despises materialism to such an extent that he has lost all sense of proportion. All monetary considerations are repulsive to him, he feels that it is almost degrading to worry about money.

But while the people at large have kept this idea, their leaders in the upper classes have realised that money to-day (let us hope that to-day will soon be yesterday!) means power, and that is why the population has become their dupe to such an amazing degree. The frivolity of the Austrian of the lower classes, and of the poorer middle classes does not display itself in the heedless expenditure

of his last penny on amusements and the craving for enjoyments which are beyond his means. For the Austrians are poor, and they cannot afford to spend the few nickels they have entirely on distractions. But it is manifested in the carelessness with which he accepts his poverty ; he does not take the trouble to investigate whence it arises and the means by which it might be remedied. In exactly the same way he accepts the laws and all the other impositions of the hateful, unconscientious people who take advantage of his easy kind-heartedness.

It is a kind of noble pride which prevents the Austrian from "scrapping" over things which appear trivial and mean to him. In consequence of this disposition of his a much worse community of exploiters exists to-day in Austria than even that of the Junkers in Prussia. This party is known as the "Agrarier" or "Gross Grund Besitzer" and consists of the owners of large properties which have been handed down from one generation of the family to another for centuries. These properties are called "Fidei Commiss." The

owner, as in England, is the eldest son, and can only spend the income arising from his estates. The result of this system in England has been that generations of landlords have turned land that might have been used for agricultural purposes into parks, thus using their power to beautify their grounds. But in Austria and Hungary the estate owners have cultivated their property with utilitarian ends alone in view. Hence while English and Scotch landlords have spent a great part of their incomes, mainly derived from rents, in maintaining the old traditions (often a burdensome charge), the Austro-Hungarian nobles, like the Junkers, have become commercialised and have formed themselves into a kind of Trust, which has pressed heavily on the other classes, particularly the poor. The Austro-Hungarians, I repeat, are worse in this respect than the Junkers, for they have a firmer hold over the law and can go farther with an Austrian population than would be possible with the Germans.

For instance, the importation of frozen meat has always been forbidden in the dual

monarchy. The price of stock was therefore regulated by those who held the greater part of it in their possession ; consequently, some years ago the price of meat had reached a height that was prohibitive even for people of moderate means—that is a family of four or five with an income of £300 a year. In 1904 meat cost as much in Austria as it does in England to-day after a two years' war ; it was naturally much higher in 1914. The same conditions hold with regard to other commodities. Sugar is a monopoly, its price varying from fivepence to sevenpence halfpenny a pound ; the dairies are in the possession of the great ones of the land—nay, not merely the great, but the greatest, who even go so far as to hold them under their own names. Thus there is an “ Erzherzog Friederich ” dairy, whose proprietor is the Archduke Friederich, Field Marshal and unsuccessful leader of the first campaign against Serbia ; there is also an “ Erzherzog Franz von Ferdinand ” dairy, owned by the late Archduke Franz Ferdinand. (I know of a large dairy-owner in London whose daughter

was refused admission to a certain school. This I find rather harsh and unfair, and I mention it only for the sake of comparison.)

Let us call this whole business by its right name. The high Austro-Hungarian nobility are nothing but detestable sharks, and while I sit and write here I feel like shouting "Down with them!" It is idle to contend that the Austrian nobility are such charming people with such easy-going manners, that they are the *ne plus ultra* of breeding and refinement. I am the last person to question the value of breeding and good blood; a real aristocracy confers an inestimable benefit on a country, it gives the people a high standard of manners and propriety. But in Austria this is not the case; the aristocracy are degenerate, not so much physically as morally. They imagine that a nonchalant smile, a little jest, a few affable words, make up the sum of their social duties. They are perfect entertainers; but so far as they are concerned, mankind ceases to exist below the rank of Baron, all other classes are "crapule," "la canaille." Yet they will not hesitate to snatch the bread

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out of the mouths of the “canaille”—to recognise them when it is a question of grabbing their money.

Yes, while the Austrian man of the people is incontestably frivolous, but with a frivolity that could be easily cured by a wise reorganisation of social conditions, the innate frivolity of the upper classes has degenerated into perverse depravity.

In very few instances do the aristocratic land- and factory-owners look after their business themselves; as a rule they have managers who share in their profits, taking advantage of the wealth that has been accumulating for long centuries. To be quite just, some of the heads of these properties are hard-working speculators—such as Prince Fürstenberg, who is one of the Austrian Agrarier as well as a German Junker (what a combination!). He is a true type of the aristocratic blood-sucker of modern times. Not satisfied with the advantages which accrue to him from his high birth and rank, together with the possession of enormous wealth gathered from his agricultural lands in Ger-

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many and Austria, he set out to amass as much gold as possible and threw himself into every branch of commerce—mining, shipping, (he is the principal shareholder of the North German Lloyd), factories of all kinds, breweries, distilleries, etc. He too, is a degenerate; he has deteriorated from a man of race and breeding into a greedy vampire, more dangerous than the Jewish usurer of Whitechapel, for naturally his commercial undertakings have proved highly detrimental to hard-working business men of limited capital.

Is it not outrageously unfair to the masses that such a man should be allowed to snatch everything for himself? What has become of the old tradition "*Noblesse oblige*" if a prince of the royal blood, equal in rank to the ruler of his country, is permitted to become a shoe manufacturer or any other description of tradesman, while he would refuse to receive the ordinary shoemaker and never dream of acknowledging him as his equal? What right has such a man to the title of aristocrat?

Such, more or less, are all the heads of the Austrian nobility—the Schwartzenegrs, the

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Liechtensteins, and so on. Those who have not been defiled by greed relax in other directions—to my mind their degeneration is less repulsive. They belong to a type which is, unfortunately, common in all countries; compare the “grand seigneur”—the spendthrift of the old French régime. Men of this kind are specially renowned for their affability and the refinement of their manners, a refinement which is only too often merely superficial. Their code of honour is strictly limited, they have lost all sense of proportion as to right and wrong, they labour under the delusion that all things are lawful to men of their rank.

Take, for example, the case of old Prince Trauttmansdorff. He must be a man well on in the seventies, if not more. When he inherited his father's estates he possessed revenues amounting to nearly sixty thousand pounds; he succeeded in contracting debts to such an extent that his income was sequestered by the creditors for seventy years, since the principal could not be touched. He had a family of five children, but his

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paternity did not enforce morality upon him, and it is a well-known fact that on an average every tenth child in the villages belonging to his estates bore a striking resemblance to the august master, who was renowned, even as an old man, for his habit of running after every good-looking peasant girl.

If the heads of the noble families are so depraved one can imagine what the sons and nephews of the younger line are likely to be. As a rule they possess all the vices without the means of gratifying them ; their allowances are generally too small to supply their needs, much less to satisfy their extravagant desires. Even for the few who are sufficiently moral it is not easy to make both ends meet. All the members of a noble house, however far removed, inherit the title, bear the same name, and are required to fulfil the obligations of their rank. The eldest son takes the money and the estates, the youngest—who has practically no income of his own—is obliged to live up almost to the state of his eldest brother. The same obligation falls upon his children, who are constantly forced into a

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position which they cannot afford to maintain. Hence arises a class of poverty-stricken aristocrats, whose financial difficulties seem only to increase their arrogance.

The consequence of this law of precedent is that the sober-minded as well as the frivolous fall into the clutches of exploiters. The well-conducted, poor, younger son or nephew with a supposed aptitude for business makes use of his great name to secure a footing in the circle of the "haute finance," while his light-minded brother aims at being on friendly terms with the financiers in order that he may borrow money from them; in return he lends them his name with the object of inducing a credulous public to invest their money in the doubtful transactions engineered by these sharks.

Austria swarms with "verkrachte Aristokraten" as the impecunious nobility are called. The young men are often so pressed for money that no resource is left them but to sell their title by marrying into the family of a rich financier. These people are almost without exception Jews, or at least of Jewish

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origin. It would be laughable, were it not so tragic, to observe how the one despises the other. The aristocrat hates the money-lender in his social disguise of gentleman, and makes no effort to conceal his disdain ; the Jew on his side smiles, rubs his hands, and shrugs his shoulders in contempt of this moral crétin, who has not enough sound marrow in his bones or brains in his skull to be a man.

But it is only during the last twenty-five years that this state of things has grown apparent. In Austria it used to be regarded with horror as the democratising of the aristocracy. Would to God it were ! But one has only to talk with one of these so-called aristocrats to realise that it is rather a symptom of an all-pervading decadence. The young nobleman is effeminate to a degree that can hardly be conceived of by the foreigner. He prides himself on the fact that he is incapable of even fastening his own shoes, he stammers and lisps a little in his speech—in fact all the aristocracy affect a nonchalant, nasal kind of intonation even in familiar

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intercourse. Such snobbery is repulsive to any person of common sense, but unfortunately the world is largely peopled with snobs to whom these ludicrous affectations appear the very hall-mark of high-breeding.

However, times are changing at last ; let us hope that the day is not far distant when a man's rank will no longer be judged by the looseness of his morals or the pretentiousness of his manners, but by his genuine worth. Socialism, the socialism which declares that all human beings can be equal and remain so, is a Utopian dream, but every individual should have the same chances at the start. Under such conditions those who arrive first at the heights would constitute the real nobility—for the time that they live on this earth—but their sons should be obliged to experience the same tests as their fathers before they could rank themselves among the noblest in the land. In all countries, whether titles are distributed or not, distinctions in rank are bound to spring up in spite of the most democratic provisions, for it is a rule of life, not for a time but for ever, that this

should be so. In a properly regulated State the harder-working, more enduring citizens would gain the upper hand, leaving idlers and slackers at the bottom of the ladder ; but as things are to-day, the opposite rule prevails. The conscientious high-souled worker has to stand aside while high-born wastrels, squandering their inherited advantages, are allowed to demoralise the world.

Nowhere is this state of affairs more highly developed as a system than in Austria. A country whose worst slackers bear such names as Fürstenberg, Schwartzenberg, and Liechtenstein, can no longer pretend to cherish the maxim "Noblesse oblige."

II. THE UPPER TEN

IT is an extraordinary fact that the Austrian woman, high and low, has a much stronger character than the man. This is probably accounted for to a great extent by the presence of the Slav element in her blood. For in the Slav family the mother is the dominating personality, and frivolity and light-heartedness are the characteristic traits of the father. The baby boy is required to submit without question to an energetic mother whose actions are dictated by her stern sense of duty, and her sway becomes more relentless as his years increase.

Yet the Austrian woman is one of the finest types in the world. I have spoken very severely in the preceding chapter of the Austrian aristocracy, but I must admit that in this rank, as in the classes below it, the women contrast most favourably with the men.

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They do their best to remedy the mistakes of their husbands and sons, yet too often they are obliged to suffer the indignities of a false position lest by showing their resentment they should precipitate some crisis. While the man is in many instances a conceited, arrogant ne'er-do-well, the woman is often distinguished by a noble pride, and tries with all her might to uphold the honour of her name. She will reject the offer of luxury rather than consent to swallow her pride and mix with people of a lower class ; it is only when her husband's resources are at their lowest ebb that she will condescend to join him in his intrigues of expediency.

On the other hand, a certain section of women of the higher middle class form a most mischievous element in society. They are, for the most part, the daughters of upstarts. Their mothers, who have shared in their husbands' struggle for existence, do not so easily lose their balance ; the memory of the poverty from which they emerged stands them in good stead. Moreover they have been poorly educated, and their lack of ac-

quaintance with foreign tongues is the greatest possible hindrance to their social career. In Austria, a woman who cannot write and converse fluently in English and French is at once branded as a member of the bourgeoisie. Hence the wife of a *nouveau riche* has many difficulties with which to contend and rarely attempts to achieve distinction by an unbridled display of extravagance and folly.

The case of her daughters is very different, for she will naturally take care that their education shall not be marred by any such defects. The daughter grows up surrounded by luxury from her childhood, and speedily discovers her mother's intellectual shortcomings. The mother in consequence loses much of her influence, which might have had a restraining effect upon the girl's increasing inclination towards frivolity. The daughter being well endowed, the fortune-hunters are soon at her heels; among them are to be found officers of aristocratic regiments, and perhaps also attachés to some of the embassies. The conduct of these men cannot be called correct by whatever standard of

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manners it is judged ; they treat the heiress with a lightness which they would not dare to exhibit were they courting a woman of their own social sphere. The girl, however, flattered by the idea of hob-nobbing with the aristocracy, imagines that this is genuine good-breeding ; her parents are no less ignorant. Not only do the young men behave very badly, but they amuse themselves by boasting of their feats to their friends and at their clubs.

Gradually this code of manners has been adopted by an entire section of Austrian society—the most depraved, probably, in the world. It has made Vienna the centre of a frivolity much lighter, much more all-pervading than that of Paris. For after all, what is Paris regarded from the standpoint of morals ? It is a goal for the foreigner of all grades who is seeking amusement, and its shady resorts are supported by the constant stream of aliens who pour into it from every quarter of the globe all the year round. Even the notorious women of Paris are very seldom French, they are cosmopolitan—they belong

to all nationalities. The medinette is indeed a true French product, but she is the fruit of a foreign clientèle. The French society woman has nothing to do with the life of the Montmartre ; she would never be seen at any of the disreputable cafés or clubs, unless it were for the purpose of giving an evening's amusement to a guest who wished to visit these world-renowned haunts. Certain distinct quarters of Paris are dedicated to the goddess of Folly ; every one knows that they exist, every one knows where they are, but they can be and are avoided by the Parisian man of good morals and good taste, and by every self-respecting Parisian woman.

Let us turn to the Vienna of to-day. During the last twenty years cabarets and cafés chantants have sprung up like mushrooms ; they are not maintained by aliens, for the number of foreign visitors to Vienna is not large enough to support the trade. Yet they are crowded every night, and the majority of their patrons are women of the upper middle class—many of whom behave in such a way that it would puzzle a stranger

to distinguish between them and the demi-mondaines.

It is all very well to assert that Paris is renowned for its immorality. The leading society of Paris preserves its standard of decorum and good-breeding ; in Vienna this is not the case.

About fifteen or twenty years ago a certain place of entertainment, called "Bradi's Wintergarden" was opened in Vienna. It was one of the first of these establishments and rapidly became popular. Originally its chief attractions consisted of exquisite music, the light Viennese song, and the waltz. It was built in a basement ; the floors were of Italian mosaic, the electric lights were concealed in plants hanging from the ceiling, the walls were adorned with palms and laurel trees growing out of golden baskets. It was in truth a delightful place, and all Vienna made pilgrimages to it. But gradually its tone changed, and from being merely a centre of inoffensive amusement it became a haunt of unprecedented vulgarity. To describe the orgies which took place there would be a

direct challenge to the censor of public morals, I will therefore confine myself to remarking that no public place in Paris, unless it is one frequented by the lowest of social outcasts—and that I doubt—has ever seen anything to compare with the condition of things that prevailed at Bradi's.

The inauguration of "Bradi's" might be regarded as the starting-point of Austrian social degradation. Since then many similar establishments have competed in depravity with the original institution, and unfortunately they are not, as in Paris, confined to a definite quarter.

Austrian society, and especially Viennese society, is quite different from that of any other country. The grades and shades are much more distinct, the spirit of caste prevails everywhere. In England, for instance, there is an aristocracy which mixes on equal terms with such people as the Government officials. Quite recently a niece of the Prime Minister was married to the only son and heir of a duke, and this marriage was considered one of the great events of the year, though

the bride is really a daughter of a member of the professional class. Indeed, most of the Ministers in the British Government have once been professional men, and the class to which they belong is thus able to intermarry with the highest in the land.

Again, these people are not ashamed to associate with manufacturers and bankers, all of whom form part of that large class which in England is called "Society," and the entrance to which depends nowadays partly upon the manner in which one entertains, but to an even greater extent upon personal merit.

In Austria there is nothing of this kind. And worse, if possible, than the domination of caste is the all-pervading spirit of "clique." At the top of the scale are the high nobility, who, as long as their means are sufficient, will have nothing to do with any Austrian or Hungarian who cannot boast sixteen ancestors—eight on his mother's and eight on his father's side! The marriage of the heir of one of these princely families to the daughter of a Prime Minister, however brilliant her father's

career might have been, would be impossible, unless he were also of noble birth. In fact she could not even be received at Court without the sixteen quarterings which really constitute a ticket of admission.

This pettiness begins at the top and is kept up by the lower strata of Society. Would it be possible to find another country in which the daughters of Cabinet Ministers are not received at Court? Is it not the climax of arrogance and audacity for one section of society to maintain such rules in the present century? And must there not be something wanting in the people who can submit to such a state of affairs?

While the nobility insist upon the strict observance of this code, the other classes manufacture systems for themselves. They too are arranged in separate divisions. There is, for example, a newly branded aristocracy consisting of rich Christians. Its members are for the most part large manufacturers of enormous wealth who try their utmost, with more or less success, to secure recognition from the old nobility. They boast no higher titles

than Baron or Knight, but they bear good old Austrian names; they are the best yeoman stock and are more solid than any other class in Austria. Their position is due to the industry of their forefathers in the businesses and professions which have belonged to them for generations. They have not adopted their careers merely for the sake of making money, they have not grabbed at commercial enterprises with a view to enriching themselves at the expense of the "canaille," but from father to son they have inherited and handed down the best traditions of an honest, hard-working people. It is upon them that Austria's future largely rests. Their code of morals is more stringent and their family pride endows them with self-respect. They have not yet been tainted with the prevailing decadence. Among them one finds such names as Baron Leitenberger, Baron Haas, Müller, von Aichholz, and Hardtmuth, of pencil fame, all of which convey an impression of dignity little inferior to those of princes of the blood, despite the fact that they are not officially received. Often

indeed they are held in greater esteem than the high nobility who enjoy free entrance to both Court and Palace. Their sons are the only members of the upper classes who are really serious men, brought up with the idea of carrying on their father's business and the traditions of his house. Unlike the great nobility, they are all entitled to an equal share in his estate, so that as a rule it is the father's ambition to develop his business in order that it may provide a sufficient income for the various members of his family. The women of this class are naturally of the very best type.

Although these people rank next to the aristocracy, yet it must not be supposed that the manufacturing class in general is considered as *élite*. On the contrary these princes of the commercial world would not care to be on friendly terms with ordinary manufacturers, who take a much lower rank.

The Bureaucrats have a circle of their own. Not possessing the sixteen quarterings, they are unable to mingle with the high nobility, and are therefore thrown into contact with

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the high industrials—the class I have just described. But the enormous difference between the incomes of the members of these two classes forms a barrier to their intercourse. While the high industrial can afford to gratify all his expensive tastes and is the happy possessor of mansions in town, castles in the country, horses, motor cars, butlers, and so forth, the high bureaucrat is a kind of noble pauper. The pay of a Prime Minister is about a thousand pounds a year ; that of a General in Command the same ; an Under Secretary has about six hundred pounds, and the underlings proportionately less. These salaries were arranged in the time of Maria Theresa, and in spite of the subsequent change in the value of money have never been increased.

The high bureaucrat is obliged to live up to his position, but not being able to compete with the wealthier class he pretends to an extreme exclusiveness. At a reception of the Prime Minister the wives of members of the high industrial class will all be present, but the wife of an Under Secretary will never

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attempt to be on intimate terms with any one of them. As a rule the high bureaucrat is a titled person, but his title is seldom higher than that of Knight or Baron.

Another very distinct class is composed of the Jewish bankers. Rothschild is at the head of them here as in other European countries. They must not by any means be confounded with the financiers whom I have mentioned before; they are a very proud set of people and would never condescend to have dealings with a penniless aristocrat, much less give him one of their daughters in marriage. Their marriages are arranged among themselves, and under no circumstances would a Jew wed a Christian. They form a very exclusive section of society, and one of no little significance and repute.

The classes of the high industrials and the high Jewish bankers are very small in number, each consisting of not more than twenty families.

The "Sodom and Gomorrah" comes lower in the scale, and consists of a mixture of individuals who might fall into any of

the other three classes. It is a very large clique, containing the loosest and most undesirable members of those classes. On the whole it is quite the worst section of the community. The leaders are upstarts, very often of Jewish origin, but they are Jews who desire to conceal their race, and many of them profess to adopt the Protestant creed. Nearly all the Protestants in Austria are so-called baptized Jews. A Jew seldom or never becomes a Roman Catholic; doubtless the change from Judaism to this form of Catholicism is too drastic, it involves the substitution of one strict set of dogmas for another.

The members of this class are people of very little principle and no seriousness. The majority of them are commercial men, among whom are to be found those financiers who live by exploiting the reduced aristocracy. But although I have distinguished them on paper from the society of the high industrials and the high Government officials, they are not so easily to be known apart in real life; they push themselves in whatever they can,

so that they are to be found almost everywhere. Their fortunes vary from twenty thousand to a hundred thousand pounds; very often they make a good deal of money, but they spend it more quickly than they acquire it. They are masters in the game of bluff. Their sons can afford to enter the bureaucratic career, since papa can provide them with a private income and is quite willing to do so for the sake of the lustre which will be shed upon his family name. Thus the youth makes friends with colleagues who are starving upon a salary of £75 or £80 a year. He invites them to dine at his home, where they eat as much as they like at a well-appointed table, perhaps for the first time in their lives. The whole object of the invitation is probably to arrange a marriage. The wealthy man may have set his affections on a sister of his friend, or he may have a sister whom he is anxious to bestow upon the starving bureaucrat of noble birth. Thus his family gains an entrance into the bureaucratic circle, which is more easily accessible than any other, since money is scarce and

very badly needed. Of course if papa is rich enough to afford the luxury of a penniless count the bureaucratic alliance is disdained. In that case his object will be to push the family into the clique of the high industrials.

It is not, however, quite so easy to gain an entrée into this set ; nevertheless the high industrial will close one eye and welcome the wife of an aristocratic husband, however mean her own parentage may be, for he is always hoping to give the impression that he is on intimate terms with representatives of Court Society. And the aristocratic husband is quite satisfied to find himself within the circle of the high industrials, a circle surrounded in this instance also by a wall of tradition.

The only class which is a caste by occupation is that of the physicians, who are respected everywhere and never pretend to be other than they are. Lawyers, on the other hand, form with few exceptions the bottom rank of "Sodom and Gomorrah." The legal profession is one which is almost entirely in the hands of Jews, for the apprenticeship to

The Upper Ten

it is so long that only wealthy Jews of the baser sort can afford to bring up their sons as lawyers. These unfortunate individuals compose a class with which no one will willingly associate—lawyers are regarded as a necessary evil. Their wives are often the daughters of Jewish shop-keepers and consequently do not count at all, since it is only the Jew of high finance who has any social status in Austria. For this reason many Jews forsake their faith as soon as they begin to climb the social ladder.

All ranks which fall below the “Sodom and Gomorrah” class, as I have named it, are considered to be negligible. Their names appear nowhere in the papers. They form in reality the Austrian middle class, and as a matter of fact are much more respectable and valuable members of the community than many who can claim a place among the most aristocratic circles of Vienna. For their sake, if for no other reason, Austria must be checked in her precipitous downward course.

III. MILITARISM

IN my last chapter on the sets in Austrian society I avoided all reference to the military class; for this reason—that this section of society is so important that it really calls for a chapter to itself. Indeed one can scarcely speak of the military caste as a “section of society”; it is an organism, so vast, so classified in itself, that it demands separate consideration.

The military class in Austria embodies a spirit which is supposed, as in Prussia, to dominate the whole country—a spirit antagonistic to the civil community in general. The military man with a touch of contempt designates any man not in uniform as “Der Civilist,” yet only the staff and the high officers from the Colonel upwards are really imbued with the Prussian spirit of militarism—that principle which exhibits itself in brutal

force towards inferiors and suave politeness to superiors—the acme of snobbish conceit.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the spirit of solidarity prevails in Austrian military society; quite the reverse is the case. The military party is broken up into cliques as numerous and as definite as are to be found among civilians. There are grades and shades of all kinds. There are first-class cavalry and second-rate cavalry regiments; officially of course there should be no difference, but socially these regiments have entirely different codes. Naturally the aristocracy again hold the social reins, and in some cavalry regiments only men who boast the aforementioned sixteen ancestors can obtain admittance, while the wife of an officer who is not of the same social rank as her husband could have no intercourse with wives who also boast the indispensable Sixteen!

Nearly all the second sons of the aristocracy are for at least a time officers in one of the regiments. Very often their military career is cut short by their accumulations of debts,

for life in these regiments is extremely costly and entails a heavy amount of social obligations. As the Court is strictly military, a large section of Court society is military also, yet even there a distinction is made between officers of high title and those who, although they hold some office of Court, belong by birth to the lesser nobility. The first Adjutant to the Emperor must be a nobleman, but this necessity does not apply to the other officers, which fact is probably due to an attempt at producing some degree of equality among them; if so it has been quite unsuccessful. The lieutenant with sixteen ancestors would take advantage of any opportunity that might arise to snub a colonel whose lineage was not so pure.

The infantry officers rank the lowest socially and may be compared to the bourgeoisie. The artillery officers are the best educated, they represent the intellectual party in the army. They are much more retiring than the officers of other regiments, and are generally speaking the most agreeable members of Austrian military society.

The less exclusive cavalry regiments form the circle of the "swanks," and are drawn for the most part from the "Sodom and Gomorrah" class.

During the last twenty years before 1914 the military class had lost much of its prestige ; the officer generally was regarded as a species of slacker, a man who shirked real work, and the military class had therefore withdrawn more and more from the civilian. It was only among the lower bourgeoisie that people could be found who would be impressed by the status of an officer. This statement could easily be proved by a perusal of the marriage registers, from which it would be seen that the majority of infantry officers married the daughters of their superiors ; the only conditions required from both sides were a certain degree of smartness on the part of the bridegroom, and the ability of the bride's father to give his daughter the dowry (Kaution) without which no officer is allowed to marry.

This dowry has to be deposited with the officers before the nuptial rites can take

place. The sub-lieutenant, whose salary varies from sixty to seventy pounds a year, must pay in the highest Kaution, that is £2,400, on which he receives an interest of 4 per cent. This means in round figures another hundred pounds a year for the maintenance of his wife. Many infantry officers are to be found who really do live on that income. They have, of course, certain small advantages; for instance, a soldier is attached to the house as orderly, so that they get a servant practically for nothing, since he is even allowed to have his meals at the barracks; all he costs his master is an occasional tip and perhaps half a crown a week.

The private soldier receives no salary, he is obliged to give his services for three years, and in exchange for them is supplied with clothes, food, lodging, and a penny a day to spend on tobacco; hence it is profitable to become an orderly, and such positions are much coveted among the rank and file.

Moreover, reductions are made in railway fares for the benefit of officers, and provisions

can be bought at somewhat lower prices from the Army Stores. But in spite of these trifling concessions, the life of a young sub-lieutenant and his wife forced to live on the interest accruing from the Kaution and his pay is a bitter struggle, for happen what may, appearances must be kept up. The young couple must be present at all the regimental festivities—balls, banquets, and bazaars. They must dress fairly well and pay calls on the wives of the higher officers, whose condescending manners are often very galling to the young brides. Frau Kapitän—that is Madam Captain—is anxious that Madam Lieutenant should recognise her superiority; Madam Major treats Madam Captain haughtily in her turn, and the less distinguished the regiment the more tenaciously are these petty distinctions in rank maintained. Thus the young officer can seldom feel really comfortable unless his wife happens to be the daughter of one of his superiors, or his means permit him to entertain a little himself.

Since the infantry regiments are not very

highly esteemed among the upper middle class, he must go to the shop-keepers and small manufacturers to find a father-in-law who can give his daughter an ample income, and who will, indeed, be pleased to make this provision for the sake of the lustre that such an alliance will add to the bourgeois family. Hence the wives of military officers are very often the daughters of the butchers and bakers of the garrison town in which the regiment happens to be stationed. The officers themselves are almost without exception officers' sons, for they can be educated in the military schools without paying fees. The son of an officer from his tenth year will cost his father nothing if he send him to one of these military boarding-schools; more often than not the father is only too glad to avail himself of this means of reducing his expenses. For the pay is extremely small, and promotion to a higher rank than a captaincy is very slow unless a man has some one of influence at his back.

There is a cruel system in all this, a system in the hands of a comparatively small number

of the higher military functionaries. The average officer is kept in a state of submission and thus converted into a pliant tool ; his poverty forces him to make his sons enter the same profession, and by this means the leaders gain control of the whole military community, in whom the habit of docility towards superiors has been so persistently inculcated that insubordination and initiative are impossible, and in which such a mass of conceit has been accumulated that it regards the rest of the world as beneath contempt.

For every officer's family considers that it ranks amongst the élite of society. They have almost nothing to live on and in many cases the mothers are members of the lower middle class, yet vanity and snobbery are rampant among them, often reaching the zenith of the ridiculous.

The daughters of infantry officers of low rank are in a pitiable case. They receive a good education at reduced fees as officers' daughters ; they are too poor to provide the *Kaution* which would enable them to marry an officer, and they are too proud to marry

into a shop-keeper's family, so they remain old maids and supply the markets in their own country and abroad with respectable governesses—gentlewomen in reduced circumstances.

It is poverty, long-standing poverty, which has in time produced this class of penurious officers and their families. They are perfectly harmless, entirely lacking in brutality, and have none of the "mailed fist" ideas which distinguish the same class in Prussia.

The ranks above that of major abound in bullies. These higher officers are most intolerable in their manners, and astonishingly narrow-minded. Unfortunately almost every town of fair size in Austria-Hungary has a garrison, and these people, with the help of their Government influence, are everywhere, and at the head of everything. No prominent person in the town, whether he be a doctor, a large manufacturer, or a landowner of the yeomanry class, would dare refuse to receive them and to give them full official recognition. So that Austria-Hungary is infested by that bullying spirit which during

the last twenty years has worked in harmony with the same spirit in Germany. The Austrian officer did not set out to bind himself to the German, but Germany was regarded as the ideal military State, the example which the Austrian military party strove to emulate.

The Emperor Francis Joseph is himself a soldier, heart and soul, hence the man who followed in his footsteps was regarded as a patriot. All the Archdukes—and there are sixty or seventy in Austria—receive a military training and a number of them are educated at military schools for officers' sons. Thus the spirit of militarism has its source in the highest class and from it is communicated to all the others. Every Archduke at the age of nineteen is made a sub-lieutenant, and from that moment he is never seen in public except in his uniform. This custom may perhaps be responsible to some extent for his contemptuous attitude towards the Civilist. Some of these Archdukes are purposely put into infantry regiments in order to impress military people with the idea that all the

regiments are equal, but these efforts again are attended with little success.

Only too often the consequence of introducing a young Archduke into such a regiment has been a Court scandal. Leopold Wölfling, who was formerly known as Erzherzog Leopold Salvator, the eldest brother of the ex-Crown Princess of Saxony, is a striking example of the effect of such an appointment. The society of his garrison town was very little to his liking; the women were of a particularly uninteresting bourgeois type, belonging to the class of infantry officers' wives whom I have before described. He felt, therefore, that he had no need to consider his actions. His manners relaxed; probably to annoy the silly snobs among whom he found himself he fell into the habit of drinking, and was not ashamed to exhibit himself in an intoxicated condition. Finally when he was tired of shocking this little society he turned his attention to the strolling companies of actors who visited the garrison town, and thus he met an actress of somewhat doubtful repute, Miss Adamobitz, for whose sake he

even gave up his title and adopted the name of Mr. Leopold Wölfling. It is true that his case is exceptional, but other examples could be cited to demonstrate that these experiments with young Archdukes in the interests of the military caste have often proved extremely risky.

All the Archdukes being "active" officers, their mode of life, their surroundings, suites, and servants are also military. Even their valets are ex-sergeants with the military discipline behind them, and thus imperial princes are spread all over the country in the different garrison towns where they maintain their little Courts. These have naturally developed into centres of militarism, since the military spirit has gradually become an essential part of Court etiquette—unwritten itself, it is stronger than any written code. In this we find another explanation of the self-importance which distinguishes the military class: they all believe themselves to be in some way connected with the Court, though their wives and daughters are never admitted unless they are of noble birth, and the officers

themselves only to certain functions of trifling importance.

Cavalry regiments, however, have a worse influence in the country than the others. Their members are imbued with the same conceit and arrogance, while they possess in addition either private means or unlimited credit. The orgies which take place in towns where cavalry regiments are garrisoned are often beyond the power of description. It is not uncommon for several regiments to be stationed in one neighbourhood, and in this case they entertain one another at sumptuous banquets. At Brünn, the capital of Moravia, the dragoon regiment No. 11, Kaiser Franz Josef (the name of the regiment speaks for itself), gave a ball in honour of the ladies of Maria-Schul. [Maria-Schul is a kind of secular convent provided by the church for unmarried ladies of the impoverished nobility. These women are not enclosed, they have taken no vows, and Maria-Schul would perhaps be best described as a Residential Club.] After a night of revelry the officers ordered the proprietor of the hotel in which

the ball was given to bring in all the china and glass which he possessed. All sorts of toasts were proposed and drunk, and finally every piece of china and glass was smashed to atoms by way of homage to the ladies. The cost of this little extravagance was five hundred pounds. The festivities came to an end at about six o'clock in the morning, after which the officers' horses were saddled and a wild ride ensued through the quiet streets of the town up to the market-place. Here the peasant women had just arrived and set out their goods—butter, eggs, fruit, and vegetables. In less than a moment the wild cohort conceived the idea of galloping through the crowd of frightened women. Swiftly it was put into execution, and eggs, butter, cabbages, and apples flew round the market-place, to the huge delight of these fine gentlemen.

At a second banquet which one regiment gave to another the Archduke Otto, father of the present heir to the throne and himself one of the nearest relations of the Emperor of Austria, was the guest of honour. When

the banquet was well advanced and most of the guests were seeing double, the Archduke loudly demanded a drum. His behest was speedily obeyed, and he then offered a prize to the guest whose performance on the instrument should be most successful. When every one had tried he awarded the palm to the Colonel of the other regiment. He then ordered champagne to be brought, and cutting the drum open at one end he filled it with that beverage to the brim. Ceremoniously he advanced towards the unfortunate prize-winner to bring him his reward. "Don't get up!" the Archduke shouted. The Colonel, never imagining for a moment what was going to happen, sat still while the Archduke poured the entire contents of the drum over his person. I leave it to the reader to make his own criticism as to the dignity of such conduct, and the expediency of making a colonel the laughing-stock of his whole regiment.

But these incidents are harmless compared with the many well-known escapades which mark the standard of regimental life in these

quarters. Many of the cavalry officers are married to girls from the Viennese "Sodom and Gomorrah" set, who are able to supply their husbands with much-needed cash. They bring with them not only their marriage portion, but also their vitiated code of morals, and in this way the unprincipled mode of life which characterises their class is spread through Vienna and Budapest over the whole country.

But the officers have a terrible code of honour of their own. They indulge freely in practical jokes, but duels are also of frequent occurrence. If an officer has been insulted by a civilian who has not received a high-school education, that is to say has not had the training which would enable him to enter the University, the officer is unable to ask for satisfaction (the military phrase for a duel), and must therefore lose his position, which is, of course, a most serious matter.

Military service is compulsory. The educated man, therefore—that is, the man who is qualified to enter the University or one of

those colleges which rank with the University, such as the Technical College, the Consular Academy, the Academy of Commerce—is obliged to serve for one year only, and for a space of time lasting twelve years he must also spend twenty-eight days with the colours every second year. After a year of service these men as a rule become sub-lieutenants, so that practically every other man of education is an officer of the Reserve, and to all of them this code, the code of military honour, applies.

A man who lost his rank as reserve officer would be handicapped for the rest of his life, as no other reserve officer would be supposed to acknowledge him any longer as his equal ; he could be invited nowhere and could occupy no prominent position. In this way the so-called Civilist has for some time been a military man, but, unlike the active officer, he hates and despises militarism. Military service has been a nightmare overshadowing the whole of his boyhood. He must get through his high-school course in order not to serve for the three years which are compulsory for

the lower classes, and thus disgrace his family. However stupid he may be in the study of Latin, algebra, etc., he must go through with it, for the sword of Damocles hangs over his head.

The man who serves for one year only is called a "Freiwilliger," literally "a free-willer," though there is very little free-will in the service he gives. Probably the term alludes to the fact that the young man is free to choose in which regiment he will serve, while the ordinary soldier must go where he is ordered. The latter is provided with his uniform, but a Freiwilliger is obliged to get his own kit. Naturally only a young man of means can enter a cavalry regiment, and his one year's service costs papa a small fortune, varying between two thousand and five thousand pounds, for he is obliged to provide his son with the two horses which the military regulations require.

The ordinary soldier is called a "Gemeiner." If you look in the dictionary you will find the word "gemein" translated "common, too familiar, vulgar, low, mean; for a soldier,

Private." Naturally the word carries with it its first definition, and the Austrian people bear a grudge against the authorities for allowing their soldiers to be called by a name which suggests poverty and meanness. Mean the word is, and mean is the treatment meted out to these poor creatures. In this matter there is an enormous difference between Austrian and German militarism—especially of course Prussian. The Austrian soldier hates his three years of service, dreads them as he might a dose of poison ; the Prussian is only too proud to put on the King's coat—he does not consider himself a complete man until he has served his time with the colours.

Prussian militarism is a spirit which pervades every rank from the highest to the lowest in the land. From the time that Prussia became a kingdom it has been systematically instilled into the people. At first probably this militarism was forced upon them, but after the time of Frederic the Great the people, rejoicing in his many military successes, began to feel that to maintain the tradition he had formed they must remain

soldiers. In the course of time the sentiment grew stronger and stronger, and the events of 1870 were considered to be a revelation of the splendour of militarism. The Prussian soldier, though under the severest discipline, regards his officer as a prophet; he has unlimited confidence in him, and after the first six months of training is as a rule well treated by his superiors.

Here I will take the opportunity to make a statement. The most unmilitary people in Germany are the Bavarians. It is a fact that in 1870 their assistance was looked upon by Prussia as negligible. When Prince Luitpold became Regent in 1886 he set himself to alter this condition of affairs, and as he owed a great deal to Prussia he turned to that country for help and advice. It was useless to try to make military men out of Bavarians, so entire Bavarian regiments were constituted out of Prussian private soldiers, and Bavarian soldiers were distributed among the different Prussian regiments. Hence there are no real Bavarian regiments to-day, and the atrocities that were perpetrated in this war by so-called

Bavarian regiments were the work of Prussian soldiers who had been incorporated in those regiments. Had Bavarians fought in their own regiments, we should have heard much the same stories as we are now told of the Saxons. The question might well arise—"Why has not Prussia pursued the same policy in the case of Saxony?" The answer is simple. The King of Bavaria is under many obligations to the Kaiser, while the King of Saxony, until the outbreak of war, was his private enemy.

Now let us return to the question of Austria. In this country the military spirit is only rampant among the highest officers. The officers of lower rank have no dislike for their profession, but they do not take it as seriously as the Prussians. For one thing their frivolous character prevents them being so much in earnest, and as a rule they do not possess the confidence of their men. This war may have brought about a change, but I doubt it even now. They had been too long in the habit of treating the private soldier with disdainful contempt as a person

without brains or soul. That which chiefly hinders any possibility of understanding between officers and men is the difference in their nationalities; for the regiments are composed of Poles, Czechs, Croats, Slovenes, Wallachians, Mohammedans, Italians and Germans.

The private soldier who hates his military service is from the beginning looked upon as a rebel who must be put into the strait-waistcoat of discipline, and the harder the method the more successful it is supposed to be. Fifty years ago lashes were prohibited, but incarceration, hanging on a wall by one hand, handcuffing the left hand to the right foot are modes of punishment as common in the Austrian army as the scolding of a naughty boy is in an English school.

To prevent the men uniting in a common cause, different nationalities are distributed among the various regiments, and these unhappy men are dragged from their homes to be stationed in far-away corners of the monarchy. This policy is extremely oppressive, and the Assentirung (the literary

word for enrolment by compulsion) is really a tragedy. One sees the poor fellows marching in fours and fives—drunk, most of them, for they have been trying to drown their despair in liquor since the early hours of the morning; their hats are adorned with small bouquets of artificial oak-leaves and coloured flowers so that they may be easily recognised. Although drunkards are liable to arrest, these men, whose mad shouts of Galgenhumor [gallows' humour] can be heard from afar, are immune. The fiction is kept up that the miserable wretches are shouting with joy, but to any one who knows the truth such scenes are heartrending. The first few months are the most terrible to the poor peasant. The recruiting sergeant, who has risen from the ranks and has chosen to continue his military service, is only too often an ambitious individual who has caught the bullying habit from his superior officers; he is their right hand and the evil spirit of the whole army. If he serves another seven years he can get a good place as policeman or gamekeeper on an archducal or imperial

estate, or some other "Court position," as this class of people love to designate their humble service in a royal house. They are often to be found in the ranks of the innumerable police detectives, whose functions frequently resemble those of a common spy, and they form too the class from which the under clerks of the Government are recruited. Of all human creatures they are the most servile towards any superior, and the meanest bullies of the poor and oppressed. They are the sneaks who prowl about scenting out the smallest political offences, such as crimes of *lèse-majesté*, and they often prove the ruin of honest men who have spoken too freely in the tavern. They are zealous for the sake of promotion and swollen with the conceit of their importance. All the pettiness of Austrian Court life to-day might be traced to the existence of this servile class; their evil eye is on every one and very often they are the go-betweens in the vilest intrigues. In course of time they marry and produce another generation to carry on their sinister traditions.

One might almost go so far as to say that every person in Austria who has any kind of connection with the imperial house, however slight, either by right of birth or by appointment—military or ecclesiastical—seems to embark on a career of crime and wickedness. If there exist evil and good spirits (and I believe they do) then the Austrian Court with all its adherents is possessed by the evil ones.

But I have digressed and must return to the subject under discussion—the sergeant. After what I have said already the reader will not be astonished to hear of the brutal way in which he addresses the recruits ; “ swine ” and “ scoundrel ” are among the mildest of his epithets. The superior officer smiles, while the unfortunate men stand to attention and receive all these insults in silence. The man who is worst off is the poor peasant who gets no support from home, for his means do not allow him to tip and treat the sergeant. Often the sergeant will borrow money from privates which he never intends to repay, and naturally the man who has nothing to lend is treated even worse than his fellows. Many

a little home has gone without the necessities of existence in order to send a few pence to its soldier son ; many a young girl has gone into domestic service so that she may be able to help her brother out of her modest earnings.

When at last the poor wretch has completed his three years' service his spirit is broken. He knows that if he dares to complain overmuch of the treatment that he has received, the ex-sergeant spy will find him out and denounce him to the authorities. Austrian militarism is, as a matter of fact, even worse than the Prussian ; it is a yoke which every individual must bear, for it is too heavy for him to throw off, and he dances and sings to drown the pain which is slumbering in his heart.

The well-to-do part of the population suffer as many hardships, though in a different manner, from the code which the officers have evolved. This code is so stringent that it often comes into conflict with the civil laws of the country. A little incident will illustrate my meaning. A great friend of mine, Dr. Adolf von Ofenheim, had an

altercation with Dr. Carl Lueger, who was at that time Mayor of Vienna. Both men are dead now, but the story will never be forgotten in Vienna. The quarrel became so violent and Lueger insulted Dr. von Ofenheim so deeply that the latter had to ask for "satisfaction" and sent him two witnesses. Dr. Lueger not only refused him satisfaction, but had Dr. von Ofenheim arrested for offending against the civil law, which in Austria prohibits duelling under any circumstances whatsoever. Dr. von Ofenheim was tried and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. May I add here that imprisonment in the ordinary sense of the word does not exist in Austria; to be sent to gaol implies that the prisoner is dishonoured for life, he loses his title and any other distinctions that he may possess. Dr. von Ofenheim appealed to the Emperor, and as his family is one of importance [one of his brothers-in-law was an Admiral and another a Brigade-General] an audience was granted him and the Emperor annulled the sentence. But had he been a less prominent person, he would have been

obliged to submit to the punishment as many others have done before and since.

Has any other country such absolutely conflicting laws? Not even Germany can boast such a paradox. Duelling is prohibited there, it is true, but the sentence passed by the civil law conveys no social stigma. I know a man who had the misfortune to kill his adversary in a duel near Berlin; of course the story could not be kept secret, and he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, at the end of that time, however, he took up his life again without the slightest stain on his character.

Until the beginning of this century the honour of an officer in serious matters had always remained above reproach. He was frivolous, snobbish, perhaps loose in his amours, but he was entirely honourable as far as his profession was concerned, though he did not regard it seriously as a *métier*. It would have been quite impossible for him to take a bribe, and also there was probably not a single man in the whole army, notwithstanding his poverty, who would have con-

descended to make money in business. The impoverished aristocrat would have parted with his military coat before he would have entered into any commercial transaction, nor could any officer have been induced to risk money in a little gamble on the Stock Exchange. The code, such as it was, was strictly kept. Financial enterprises were unworthy of an officer, for the military set was at that time the only one which had resisted the inroads of commercialism. Although the struggle for existence was increasing daily in magnitude [we all know at what a pitch of extravagance people were then living], and though temptations surrounded him on every side, yet the officer kept his hands clean. But suddenly an influence coming from the highest quarters brought down this last moral stronghold.

Franz Ferdinand was on bad terms with the Archduke Frederic because he had married a lady-in-waiting of the latter's daughter, then the young Archduchess Marie-Christine, and was using his influence to obtain the position of Inspector-General of the Army,

which had hitherto been in the Archduke Frederic's hands. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who, as I mentioned before, was one of those vampires who accumulated wealth at the expense of the community, now used his power to make money even out of the soldiers. The Archduke Frederic was a bad enough example, but as long as he left the military people alone he had been absolved by his class with the typical Austrian shrug of the shoulders so characteristic of the national frivolity. But Franz Ferdinand knew only one code—the code of his own interest, and he actually took whole regiments of soldiers from their military duties to make them work on the impoverished estates which he bought cheaply and put in working order in this inexpensive fashion. The time which the men spent in these agricultural pursuits counted to them as military service.

Franz Ferdinand succeeded in replacing all the former high officials by his own creatures, the most notorious of whom was a General of the Staff, the ill-famed Conrad von Hötzendorf. These individuals of course

never attempted to oppose the man to whom they owed their elevation. The scandal became so notorious that a question was asked in Parliament, but still no action was taken. At first the military people rubbed their eyes. Was this possible? Then they ceased to shrug their shoulders; they had learnt their lesson. Why should an "all-highest" act like this and they not follow his example? Thus the one redeeming point in Austrian militarism disappeared for ever.

In June 1913 the whole world resounded with the scandal of Staff-Colonel Raedel's suicide. The Colonel had been living at a very high rate; he had had many liaisons in Vienna, culminating in his connection with a strikingly fashionable foreign lady, whom he provided with motor cars, a costly furnished flat, and all the other luxuries demanded by her class. How did the Colonel manage, with a salary of about £300, to support all this expenditure? He was not the only officer living at such a rate, and at last the newspapers took the matter up. Colonel Raedel's flat in Vienna was raided,

and a voluminous correspondence with Russia was discovered. There was no getting away from the fact that the first Colonel of the Austrian staff, a man who was actually making plans for the Austrian campaign, was in the pay of Russia. But the matter was not to end here. After the Colonel had been arrested an officer brought him a revolver and made the wretched man understand what he was to do. A trial was impossible, as too many prominent officials were involved in the scandal!

Such was the state of morals in the Austrian Army a year before the war broke out. Can the Austrian people wonder that they were sold to the highest bidder?

IV. POLITICAL AUSTRIA

“**E**NGAGED in contests of power the Athenians did not pay sufficient attention to the armies abroad and were embroiled in mutual altercations at home. They would not have been conquered had not their own domestic feuds at last disabled them from resisting their enemies.”

These words were written by Thucydides, who actually witnessed the decline and fall of Athens in the fourth century before Christ, and yet, in spite of their antiquity, how applicable they are to-day to some modern States, and especially to Austria!

Austria, a conglomeration of some twelve or more nationalities, has during the last fifty years been so agitated by her internal difficulties that she has had to neglect her foreign politics. Hence she has arrived at the position in which she finds herself to-day.

She is at the point of collapse. She stands on the brink of a downfall from which only a miracle can save her.

To understand the position exactly this question must first be answered: "What is Austria, and who are the Austrians?"

The real Austria consists of the Crown lands or lands of inheritance [Kronländer, Erbländer] the original possessions of the Hapsburgs. These formed a part of the Holy Roman Empire, were indeed in the possession of the sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire just as Prussia is now part and head of the German federation—of the new Germany created by Bismarck in 1870. The Crown lands are: Lower Austria, Upper Austria, the provinces of Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and the Tyrol with Vorarlberg. Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia [a part of this last State was annexed to Prussia by Frederic the Great] became part of Austria through a Hapsburg ruse, for the Hapsburgs understood the art of winning lands by means of profitable marriages. The same is the case with Hungary, yet it must be added at once

that that State only recognised the Hapsburg as their King and was never incorporated into the empire of Austria. These countries which I have mentioned form the Austro-Hungarian monarchy of to-day.

It is easy, therefore, to recognise that Austria as a nation does not exist. The original population of the Crown lands, except in the case of Carniola, which is peopled by a race of Slavs [the Vends], is German; the Bohemians and Moravians are Czechs—a Slav race; the Poles are Slavs also; the Hungarians are Magyar, a Mongol race more like the Turks, but they are Christians; the Bosnians are Serbs, that is Slavs, and the people of Goritzia and Gradiska, Istria, and Dalmatia are all of Italian origin, but in some parts have intermingled with the Slavs. All these different races have intermarried a good deal, and as the result of these unions a special race has sprung up which has settled chiefly in the Austrian Crown lands and especially in Vienna, the centre of the monarchy, for the pure races look with suspicion on the offspring of these mixed

marriages. These people call themselves Austrians and are moreover very indignant should they by any chance be termed Germans. They consider themselves the founders of a new nation, namely the Austrian. They are obviously a mixture of German, Slav, and Italian, retaining many of the fine qualities of the three races ; they are artistic, generous, frank, and intelligent, but they seem to have absorbed much of the frivolity of the Poles and the gaiety of the southern German and Latin races, and have thus become even more casual and heedless than any one of the three parent stocks.

But while the inhabitants of the Crown lands have become so mixed, strangely enough the other countries have kept their strain pure. Was the reason for this the fact that the inhabitants of the Crown lands conceived themselves the chief nation in the monarchy, and therefore did not deem it necessary to preserve their German strain ? Or was it perhaps due to their geographical position ? Bohemia, Hungary, Galicia—indeed, all the other provinces were bordered by States

which did not belong to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, while the Crown lands, lying almost entirely in the centre of the monarchy, were surrounded by States under the same government.

There are parts of Bohemia entirely inhabited by Germans, and these people call themselves "German Bohemian" [Deutsch-böhme]; they are the deadly enemies of the Czechs, and the idea of intermarriage between the races would be equally detestable to both. The German Bohemians are the most Chauvinistic people of the whole monarchy, and the chief representatives of the German national party in Parliament. It is among them that Prussia has found most assistance. The Poles in Galicia, owing to the fact that they were conquered by force, make some stand for themselves. The Hungarians, who had to fight so hard for their independence, were till the beginning of this war openly anti-German, and their conduct at this crisis is made the more inexplicable by the reality of this hatred, which certainly existed up till 1914. I am convinced that the attitude of

Hungary is simply the result of German intrigue, and that after the war the real feelings of the Hungarians towards Prussia will once more be expressed.

The feeling of Italy towards the old German Empire which was ruled by the Hapsburgs, and the modern Austrian Empire is thoroughly well known. It is not therefore difficult to divine the sentiments that prevail in the Austrian-Italian provinces.

This conglomeration of nationalities forms in short the Austria of to-day.

When in 1804 Austria ceased to be the head of the Holy Roman Empire, and the Emperor Francis II induced by Napoleon I exchanged his title of Holy Roman Emperor for that of Emperor of Austria, his dream and ambition was to found a vast empire of the Orient, reducing the Balkan States to the position of feudatories. In that way Austria would have regained in the east the prestige which Napoleon had wrested from her in the west.

The same ambition was handed down to the descendants of Francis, but the aims of

the Emperors went exactly counter to the aspirations of the races under their sway. While the rulers dreamed of a homogeneous nation acknowledging one government, the ruled were striving with all their might for the recognition of their separate national rights, language, literature, and legislation.

Thus these nations forgot their own true interests and neglected all questions of European policy in squabbling among themselves over their racial differences, while the rulers, instead of trying to make them come to an understanding, fostered this quarrelsome spirit among their subjects so that they might be left free to take part in foreign politics. As always their own ambitious schemes were of paramount importance, the interests of their people ranked far below.

It was under such circumstances that a Parliament consisting of innumerable parties, a Parliament to which all the Parliaments of the world can present no parallel, which has become the laughing-stock of Europe, came into existence. In other countries there are two definite parties—Conservative and Liberal.

—which are bound together by many common interests, but in the Austrian Parliament the German Conservatives have quite different aims from the Bohemian-Czech Conservatives, the interests of the Bohemian-Czech Conservatives are again other than those of the Polish Conservatives, the Polish from the Italian, and so on. The same argument of course applies to the Liberal party. For example, the German Conservatives always opposed the foundation of an Italian University at Trieste which was the dream of the Italian Conservatives.

The Austrian Parliament therefore contains German Conservatives and Liberals, Polish Conservatives and Liberals, two Czech parties, two Italian, two Serbo-Croats, two Ruthenian (who are Poles of the Orthodox Church), and other factions. The Poles opposed the Ruthenians on a religious question, and thus caused another split in the so-called Conservative party. But these rude distinctions between Conservatives and Liberals do not stand alone; other parties exist in Austria, such as the clerical party, of which

I will speak later, the anti-Semites, the German-clerical party, etc.

The course of the Government then is simple. Should any question be asked in Parliament which is disagreeable to the Emperor, who is supreme in name, but who is ruled by the Court parties and by the military class, a little judicious sowing of dragon's teeth will produce a bitter quarrel between one or more of the various antagonistic factions, and in the ensuing squabble the important matter which aroused the question will be shelved. Thus Austria in spite of her constitution has remained an autocracy ruled by the Emperor, or rather by his Camarilla, who are very greatly under the influence of the Vatican, or still more of the Jesuits, but who pretend to be violently militarist, knowing the inclination of the Emperor towards militarism.

Again, the people of Austria are not politicians. They are far too idealistic, too much of the dreamer type to occupy their minds for long with what they consider the dry subject of politics. As a fact the masses

do not understand at all in what the game of politics consists. Very few indeed realise that the deputy they have power to elect is the man who is to represent their wishes in Parliament. An election in many districts is a farce in the hands of the different party leaders, and the result does not represent the voice of the people at all.

This system of keeping the populace in ignorance is deliberately conceived by the class which has all power in its hands. The result is that a district will be represented for years and years by a member who cares nothing for the welfare of the people who have elected him. Often he will be an idealist, regarding himself as an apostle of his own nationality. The member of Parliament of a Czech district, for instance, will devote all his energies to elaborating the Czech programme and altogether neglect the interests of the district as a whole. I merely take the Czechs as an example, the same is true of every other race.

Thus it will be seen that any general question of social progress, or matters such

as the overtaxing of the poor, the granting of concessions which are unfavourable to the district and the framing of laws, can be carried through by the Government without encountering any great opposition, provided that the law affects the whole country and not the private interests of any particular district. It is easy therefore to understand how the Agrarier managed to impose such laws as those which prohibited the importation of frozen meat, and how Archduke Franz Ferdinand could with impunity make use of soldiers to work on his estates. In that case it is true the matter was brought into Parliament, but as it was a question that concerned Austrian economy and not the policy of any one nationality no difficulty was experienced in thrusting it aside.

It is a recognised fact that nowhere do people grumble and criticise their Government more than in Austria, but the Austrian does not realise that the redressing of his grievances lies in his own hands. He seems to forget that he sends a representative to Parliament whose business it should be to

make these criticisms where they might be effective. The Austrian elector is unaware of his own power.

Some parties, for instance the Polish, which is called the "Poland Club," consist almost entirely of aristocracy. But the Polish peasant right up to the present day looks upon the big landowner as his master who in case of necessity will protect him. Though serfdom is of course abolished in Poland, a sort of patriarchal spirit has remained prevalent there, and consequently almost without exception the peasant will elect one of the prominent landowners of his district as his deputy. At this point one might produce a proof of the value of an aristocracy that has preserved its hereditary caste and breeding. The Polish nobleman has kept aloof from the commercialising influences which have debased the aristocracy of the other districts of the monarchy. This may be in part due to the downfall of their country, but with more probability it may be assigned to their inherent and traditional contempt for commerce. For in Poland commerce was and is

almost entirely in the hands of the Jews—the notorious Polish Jews, who in that country take the place of the middle class. Thanks to this aloofness, the Poland Club is to-day a very powerful party in the Austrian Parliament. A Cabinet is seldom formed nowadays without the inclusion of one or two Poles, and these men may be considered as the leaders of the Pan-Slavist movement.

During the last three decades this movement known as Pan-Slavism has come into great prominence, and has indeed had something to do with the origin of the present war.

The Slavs were determined to fight for the rights to which they were fully entitled. The Hungarians had after great struggles and sacrifices obtained their autonomy—that is to say, their own Parliament and their own military laws. Why should the Bohemians, Galicians, and other Slavs be deprived of theirs? Austria had captured these countries and was now intent on crushing their individuality, but what had happened so often in the history of other nations was happening here—the conquered were absorb-

ing the conqueror and putting their stamp on the country that had enslaved them. The German language still remained the Government language, but in the Slav countries the familiar speech was Slav. We have noted above how de-Germanised the original German-Austrian countries were becoming ; the language indeed had not changed, but a kind of indifference prevailed, not a little due to the great Slav and Latin influence—the Slav being much the stronger.

Germany gradually realised that Austria was on the eve of becoming a Slav country, for even the Italian provinces had come under the lead of the Pan-Slavists. In time this great Slav Empire would become a menace to the entire Teutonic race. Some powerful check must therefore be inaugurated against it. This change of front was first manifested in the German parts of Bohemia, which, as I mentioned before, are the most chauvinistic of the monarchy. The idea spread in the original German districts—the Crown lands—especially in Styria and the Northern Tyrol. Soon a party under Schönerer was formed,

which henceforth termed itself "The German National Party" [Deutsche National-Partei]. Unquestionably this party had no wish to be swallowed up by Prussia and become a German province in the sense in which the small kingdoms of Bavaria and Saxony really exist. Never for a moment did they aim at the inclusion of the Crown lands as an insignificant kingdom of the German federation; no, they were harking back to the old Hapsburg dream of an Austrian empire extending over half the European continent.

Prussia on her side seized the opportunity to delude these fanatics with false prophecies as to the realisation of their hopes. She stirred the dead ashes of the fire that they were longing to rekindle, stirred them so well that it is to this blinded faction that Austria owes thanks to-day for her undoing by Germany, her treacherous ally. For gradually the Nationalists allied themselves to the military party, who saw in them the Parliamentary representatives of German militarism. It is only during the last fifteen years that

Austrian politics have come under the complete sway of the militarists. One of the last struggles against this predominance was made by Count Aehrenthal, a genius much too little appreciated by his contemporaries. General Conrad von Hötzendorf with Franz Ferdinand's backing had, at the end of 1911, become so powerful that he almost succeeded in overthrowing Count Aehrenthal's policy with Italy, and brought Austria to the brink of a war with that country. Italy, who was then involved in her war with Tripoli, was to be attacked by her ally in the back. The troops of the Southern Tyrol were only waiting for the order for mobilisation when after a last effort Count Aehrenthal put it to the Emperor either to dismiss Conrad von Hötzendorf or to accept his own resignation from the Foreign Office. The Emperor after some hesitation elected to dismiss the General, and thus for a time Austria was saved from the outbreak of war.

But from this moment the breach between the Emperor and his heir became irremediable. Franz Ferdinand took the dismissal of the

General as a personal affront and never ceased to scheme for his restoration to power.

A few months later, in the spring of 1912, death, the inexorable, dealt the blow which the Emperor had refused to strike, and finally removed Aehrenthal from his position. He died of a very mysterious illness, a kind of decomposition of the blood, the result of blood poisoning alleged to have been an after-effect of influenza. He was only fifty-five years of age and had been a healthy man up to that time. Under the Medici some centuries ago people were known to die of similar mysterious maladies.

With his death Europe as well as Austria lost one of her best men, her best politicians, and it is not too much to say that had he lived this war would never have taken place, for it owes its origin to the scheming of Franz Ferdinand and Wilhelm II, whose strongest opponent Count Aehrenthal had ever been. In Austria it is dangerous to oppose. Count Aehrenthal died.

V. CHURCHES AND JESUITS

I HAVE tried to show to what an extent races are divided up and reclassified in this extraordinary monarchy of sliced-up nations. I have demonstrated how not only by nationality, but by rank, caste, and clique these people have subdivided themselves to the most bewildering point of complication, indeed it would be impossible for an outsider to make head or tail of the whole matter. And yet there is one great power which holds this modern Babel together, a power which dominates the highest, the richest, the most cultivated, and the frivolous no less than the poorest and most ignorant, a power to which even the divers races bow—Slavs as well as Germans, Italians as well as Hungarians—a power to which they all owe obeisance, namely the Roman Catholic Church.

Is it not pathetic that the Church should

have failed to recognise her true mission? The one subject on which all these nationalities are agreed is that of Faith; it was as if they had been tested by the Almighty. In all worldly concerns these people were as poles asunder, but in God they were united. The only link that was left to be broken was their religious sympathy. Does it not appear as almost a dispensation of Heaven that out of fifty million people forty should be undivided in their religious belief, and that the other ten should profess so many divergent creeds that they counted for nothing in comparison with the vast preponderance of Roman Catholics? The Protestants, the members of the Orthodox Church, and the Mohammedans formed an inconsiderable minority, only the Jews gained power and influence. Is it not a pity that in a domain which might have been a kingdom of Christian love Rome should have used her power to spread terror, to oppress, and to defame her prestige? A pity that instead of glorifying herself by making all these scattered members of her flock realise that there was but one fold and

one Shepherd, she preferred to sow the seeds of hypocrisy, jealousy, and discord. But the fact remains that instead of being the salvation of this unfortunate country Rome became her greatest curse ; for, though the Church is good, her priests were bad. They did not wish to heal, to console, to act as peace-makers, to lead their flock to heaven ; they only thought of their own advantage—how to make the biggest profit out of this unhealthy condition of affairs, in order that it might yield them a rich harvest.

Let us see how they, the only link between the highest and the lowest, oppressor and oppressed, made use of their influence.

They gave the rich and powerful bad advice ; they told them that as long as they were ardent adherents of Rome they could obtain absolution for their sins, and thus planted the roots of hypocrisy in their hearts. Indeed they drove a bargain with them—so long as the priesthood could be paid, so long would absolution be obtainable. The poor were told that it was the mark of a Christian to endure suffering and privation, and thus

the priesthood played into the hands of the rich and helped to keep the oppressed in check.

When the so-called Holy Roman Empire came to an end in 1804 the death-knell for Rome's temporary power was tolled, though its destruction was not completed until another sixty-five years had passed. Naturally enough the Hapsburgs and the Vatican clung to one another, dragged one another down like two shipwrecked men, but while the support of the dual monarchy maintained the prestige of the Vatican, the Vatican on the other hand wrought havoc in the Hapsburg dominions.

Prince Metternich, the powerful Chancellor of Francis I, Emperor of Austria, reinstated the Jesuits in full power, although they had been driven out of the country by Joseph II, the uncle of the Emperor Francis. Metternich, who was the most reactionary statesman of modern times, and who at Napoleon's downfall assumed the rôle almost of Dictator of Europe, realised that his reactionary schemes could only be carried through with the assistance of the Jesuits. The Court was brought entirely under their domination,

the education of all the young archdukes and archduchesses was placed in their hands, and the older members of the Royal Family were kept under the Jesuit influence by the appointment of Jesuits as almoners.

May I say here that the English Jesuit differs materially from the Continental members of the Order? The English Jesuit is incapable of shaking off the essential quality of an Englishman's nature—discretion. Inquisitiveness is a characteristic so entirely foreign to the character of the Englishman that no amount of influence would ever make it natural. The same may be said of his methods. The Englishman would rather die than save his life by a means which would seem to him unclean; his insular upbringing has made it impossible for him to assimilate Continental practices. But the whole system of the Jesuits is based on ruse and intrigue, on underhand methods of satisfying their curiosity. The English Jesuit is incapable of understanding, much less of imitating, his Continental brother in this respect. The Austrian Jesuit is his exact opposite; know-

ing himself all-powerful, he has lost all sense of proportion. The Jesuits have assumed control over the whole of the priesthood and consequently over a whole community, and what does not suit their purposes is relentlessly wiped out. No human life, man's, woman's, or child's, is sacred to them if it stands in their way. They are the advisers of the Emperor, they are his confessors, he humiliates himself before them and obeys their wishes. Should he indeed show any reluctance to carry out their instructions they take the law into their own hands. If a rebel exists among the ranks of the powerful he is soon disposed of. Many if not most of the tragedies in the life of the Emperor Francis Joseph may be laid to the charge of the Jesuits. They have formed round him an insurmountable barrier, every individual about his person is under their dominion. I have heard Catholic priests in England speak quite openly against the Jesuits, but never would any one attempt to do this in Austria, for the whole Catholic priesthood is under their sway. No political career, no success in the

Government or the Army can be achieved without a profession of fervent attachment to the Catholic Church. In Parliament the ecclesiastical party is all-powerful. But while the Emperor Francis Joseph is an ardent believer and a really pious man, his piety lending a lustre of veritable spirituality to the Court, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his morganatic wife, the Duchess of Hohenberg, were superstitious hypocrites. Backed by them the Church reopened a reign of terror worthy of the times of the Inquisition. The only class in Austria who have really remained fervent believers are the peasantry ; the lower orders of townspeople and the middle class have lost all belief and are absolute materialists.

The only religions tolerated beside Roman Catholicism are the Lutheran, the Orthodox, and the Jewish, for the Catholic Church, which is the Government Church, has the last voice in all religious questions. Nonconformist churches are prohibited, freemasonry is absolutely banned, even the Salvation Army is not allowed, and psychical research is

forbidden. So far does this narrow-mindedness go that cremation is illegal, and the dead who in their last will and testament have expressed a wish to be cremated must be exported to Germany. Hence those souls who cannot accept the strict dogmas of the creeds which are allowed in Austria have no opportunity of enjoying a freer faith. They must either recite one of the recognised formulas or place themselves among the ranks of the atheists. On the other hand, religious teaching in the schools is obligatory and parents are forced to have their children instructed in one of the four creeds. The children of parents who have no religious belief themselves despise this teaching and generally develop into more convinced unbelievers than their parents before them.

This lack of religion may explain much of the frivolity of the people in general and the unscrupulous depravity of the higher classes, for the religiosity which was forced upon them has no less an atheising influence. Their religion forbids them to think, they must accept in blind faith ; often they feign

a faith which they do not possess, for they dare not investigate. They drift, and gradually they lose consciousness of good and evil and laugh at the idea of any life to come. But in order that the people may be blinded to the fact that their higher aspirations are interdicted, the roads to frivolity and immorality are left open. On one side of their existence is a narrow and jealously guarded boundary, but the primrose path of dalliance is wide and easy of access.

But fifty million people cannot remain for ever in obscurity, and this war will make a big difference. The people of Austria are starving for high ideals. They have been forced into a crude materialism, albeit they are naturally idealistic. This war had to come to save their souls. Materially Austria may go down, but spiritually she will rise. The Church which might have joined her varying elements together by her good influence will succeed in uniting them by her evil practices.

People of Austria, at last you have one cause in common! Fight for your souls' salvation.

VI. THE CHILDREN OF SHEM

THE only people in Austria who have made any real material advancement during the last century are the Jews, and their progress has been extraordinary. In a certain sense they may be looked upon as the counterpart of the Jesuits.

The Jews owe their freedom in Austria to the Emperor Josef II, a man of noble and original character, proud, impetuous, but more broad-minded than any sovereign of Germany who has reigned before or after him. He it was who, as I mentioned before, expelled the Jesuits from Austria and opened the country to the Jews. Personally I have no grudge against the Jews. They doubtless have many good points, yet I often wonder if Josef banished one troublesome class only to make room for the members of another, if one may say so. For of course the Jews

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are a race who have as much right to "a place in the sun" as any other nation, while the Jesuits are an organisation bent on undermining all modern systems of government, law, and education.

Josef died in 1790 after a short reign of ten years. He was only forty-nine at the time of his decease; his death still remains one of the mysteries, the many mysteries, of Hapsburg history.

Shortly afterwards the Jesuits were reinstated, but the Jews did not return to their Ghettoes. Hence Austria became the goal of all the persecuted Jews in the world and provided a second Palestine for this race of permanent exiles. At first they existed in Austria as if on sufferance, subdued, fawning and crouching like animals, but by degrees they managed to gain ground and finally became one of the dominating factions in the country. Gradually they secured possession of the financial market to such an extent that nobody nowadays is able to prosper without their assistance. Even the Jesuit at times has recourse to the money-bags of the Jew,

and to carry on the work of the Cross calls to his aid the descendants of the crucifiers.

For the people of Austria are not rich ; only the wealthier members of the aristocracy and the Jews possess fortunes which English people would regard as considerable.

From the Emperor to the smallest tradesman every individual must have a Jew as financial adviser, and it must not be imagined that these important people creep about in dirty caftans ; on the contrary, many of them pose as leaders of fashion. They entertain lavishly, support princely establishments, and from all points of view are persons to be reckoned with. The scornful nickname of " Hof-Jude " by which they were originally designated has now descended to the level of a joke which no one would venture to use in Austrian society.

The financial advisers of the Emperor for many years were Theodor von Taussig, Managing Director of the Boden-Kredit Anstalt, and Josef Palmer, Superintendent of the Länderbank. Taussig had twelve children, and was so prosperous as to boast that

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he would not be satisfied until he had accumulated enough wealth to settle a million florins on each child at his own death and a second million at the death of his wife. To do this he would have to acquire a fortune of two million pounds, which corresponds roughly to twenty-four million florins. [The Austrian florin was worth about one shilling and eightpence in our currency before the war—not to-day!] As a matter of fact he succeeded in amassing an even larger amount before he died.

This man lived in a style of the most extraordinary ostentation. In the winter the family resided in town, occupying the entire third floor of the bank building; they spent the summer in a château near Vienna adjoining Schönbrunn, the imperial castle. A large party of governesses and tutors was attached to the household; each child monopolised the services of one maid, and servants were provided for the educational staff. The establishment was indeed an exact copy of an archducal household. The parents even went so far as to dress their daughters in the

simple toilets affected by the high nobility. This must have involved severe self-discipline on the part of their mother, and proved the sincerity of her admiration for the class she was imitating. Wealthy Jewish magnates do not as a rule adopt that severe simplicity of costume which makes young Archduchesses look more like the inmates of an orphanage than royal princesses. For the children of the Austrian royal family wear their hair always in tight plaits, which are only unbound on high days and holidays. At ordinary times their gowns are of blue or check material, on special occasions of white embroidery; they wear plain white straw hats, and the only sign of distinction in their attire is to be found in the white gloves with which their hands are invariably covered. The children of Frau von Taussig were therefore garbed in this simple fashion. They were a good-looking family and very few of them were of a pronounced Jewish type, not one had dark hair, and some of the daughters were remarkably beautiful. Nevertheless the pseudo-archducal *ménage* was almost comic

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and not at all in keeping with Mr. von Taussig's origin. His father, I believe, hawked felt shoes from door to door.

The other financier, Herr von Palmer, was introduced to the Emperor by the woman who had been his friend for years—Frau Katharina Schratt. He was a bachelor, and it was therefore easier for the Emperor to meet him socially. An expert at the game of taroque [a game of cards], Herr von Palmer owed his fortune to this accomplishment. Several times a week his Majesty would visit Frau von Schratt at her house. She knew how fond he was of taroque and would arrange little card parties for him, at which the banker soon became an indispensable fourth. The Emperor does not like losing, and though he plays for very low stakes he is furious if any one dares to beat him. The shrewd Jew soon became aware of this and gained the old monarch's favour by allowing him to come off victorious in his pet game. Having thus obtained his confidence, it was easy to recompense himself by success in games of finance when considerably larger stakes were concerned.

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These two instances are by no means exceptional, though all wealthy Jews do not aspire to the gentility displayed by the family of Herr von Taussig. The luxury indulged in by Israelitish households is notorious, and servants are always anxious to obtain situations in them. These people form the only class in Austrian society which could be compared with the "Get-Rich-Quicklys" of Trans-Atlantic fame. At first no doubt they were satisfied with living well and imitating the upper classes, but in time they began to compete for and to attain a foothold both in the social and in the commercial world. Very soon the Jews were ubiquitous; they had acquired almost complete control of the business of the country and it seemed probable that they would even take the reins of government into their own hands. They became such a nightmare to the other classes in Austria that a strong parliamentary party known as the "Christlich-Socialen" [Anti-Semitic league] was formed to oppose them. For a time the efforts of this party held back the onrushing tide of Jewry, and its advent

caused a lull in the progress of the Hebrew invasion.

In the seventies Austria, after her wars and quarrels with Prussia, Italy, and Hungary, was on the brink of bankruptcy. The Jewish bankers saved the situation. The Emperor, to reward these acts of (shall we call it?) patriotism, found himself obliged to confer the order of Knighthood on a great number of these people, to the desperate anger of Christian high society. Probably the monarch himself shared some of this disgust. At the first great ball to which the new knights had to be admitted a list of names of the personages to be presented to the Emperor was read aloud to him. "Poor Austria!" he exclaimed, "if these are the only knights to protect you in the future!" His words were more ominous than he realised.

For some time after this the triumphant course of the Jews was checked to some extent by the hostility which they encountered, but Israelitish ruse and cunning soon discovered a method of evading the new danger. The Jew had made up his mind to

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soar and all inconvenient scruples had to be cast over the side. A new class, that of "baptized Jews," began to spring up among them.

In my opinion it is these people who are really responsible for Austria's moral degradation. While the Jesuits sowed the seeds of unbelief and reaction, these so-called converts spread cynicism and boundless frivolity. While under the Jesuit régime the people were kept in a condition of ignorance and narrow-mindedness from which there was hope that they might ultimately emerge, the influence of the converted Jews was utterly demoralising and productive of shameless decadence. This new element of moral degradation aroused in serious people a feeling of profound disgust and drove them back to the Church as the only stable thing in a world of corruption. Thus the chains of the Jesuits were riveted more firmly. "Do you not see," they could say to their flocks, "where a life of unbelief leads? Look at the results of modern teaching, of new faiths and new doctrines!" They might say this,

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but they knew very well all the time that while these pretended converts might profess what doctrine they liked, they were really guided by nothing but their own perverted instincts.

The Jews are a very ancient people and until quite lately of an exceptionally pure strain, for laws and traditions have prevented them from intermarrying. Hence no doubt they have become more or less degenerate in certain respects. The fact that they still exist as a fairly vigorous stock is probably due to the persecutions and restrictions which they endured for so many centuries after their downfall as a nation. Being naturally of a sturdy and determined disposition, they asserted themselves in spite of the efforts of other races to exterminate them. But what poverty, misery, and humiliation may fail to do, wealth and ease have often been known to achieve. As long as they were confined to their Ghettoes they did not fall under the influence of that decadence which attacks old and exclusive races. But now their decline is certain, they are going up like a rocket to

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come down like a stick. For a short time they will have made havoc in every corner of Austria. They have no nationality, they have no soil to which they are attached, they are deprived of all which makes a people noble and disinterested. Exiles of the ages, their business is to do the best for themselves in whatever territory they happen to be placed. But while in other countries they are but a minority unequally matched against a national majority, in poor split-up Austria they form one of the most influential of her many different factions and their influence is diffused throughout the empire.

Everywhere the Jews have become the governors of the Austrian middle classes. They compete successfully in the traffic connected with all trades—in the traffic only, since the Christian does the work and the Jew pockets the profits. Big stores such as those of Peter Robinson, Marshal & Snelgrove, Debenham & Freebody are in Vienna in the hands of Jews. The same conditions exist in the larger provincial towns, where their influence over the townsfolk is

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still greater, as money is even more important in such places. Just as the more prosperous Jews copy an aristocracy which is scarcely worthy of imitation, so the less-important Jews model themselves on the example of the Jewish magnate. The rest of the population try to follow suit. One of the most dangerous features of the case is that Jews are for the most part excellent conversationalists and often very witty and attractive. Their mode of life and their animated manners exercise a certain fascination.

Anecdotes about Jews are innumerable, and though they mostly refer to the lower grades of the community many of them could be applied to the whole race. Gossip travels fast in Vienna, for after all it is a comparatively small city and it was not until the outskirts were included in its boundaries that it was able to boast two million inhabitants. The Viennese are much more friendly than, for instance, the English. Coolness and reserve are taken in Austria as signs of animosity if not rudeness. The habitual reserve of an Englishman would only be affected by an

Austrian with a person of his own class with whom he was on bad terms, or with some one from a lower clique who was trying to push into his intimacy. For reserve in Austria implies hostility, there is no such thing as cool but friendly politeness. A proud aristocrat may snub a Jew of the High Finance, but he will have no objection to playing practical jokes in the company of his valet. The wife of a high Government official will be on quite friendly terms with her maid, though she will behave with the most chilling hauteur towards the wife of some *nouveau riche* who presumes to angle for her social recognition. Servants are considered so much lower in the social scale that it would be an impossibility for them ever to take advantage of their mistress's familiar attitude. Were their employers to adopt a distant manner towards them, they would be looked upon as hard and inconsiderate and be very poorly served in consequence. Does it not show that a much greater equality exists among the classes in England, that a mistress must preserve a stiff and constrained demeanour towards her

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domestics in order to keep them, as she would say, in their proper place ?

But this rather nonchalant intercourse between the lady of the house and her domestic staff in Austria fosters gossip, and the mistress who loses her maid to-day may be certain that every one of her actions will be faithfully reported to the mistress who engages her to-morrow. Thus the Austrian servant is a kind of loophole through which one can peer into one's neighbour's privacy, and many a little social custom has been spread from family to family by the agency of servants. The story of any amusing or out-of-the-way incident will soon be published throughout Vienna, and as the Jews are an interesting and traditionally comic race they figure largely in the répertoire of these tale-bearers.

The social boycott of the Chosen People has diminished very much during the last few years. The Jew of High Finance is an excellent entertainer, and people who could not afford luxuries in their own homes have condescended to enjoy them in the houses of

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the Jewish *nouveaux riches*. A ball given by one of these plutocrats would be a much more elaborate affair than those for which a member of the aristocracy had been responsible. Priceless flowers would be presented to the young girls in the cotillion, cigars and cigarettes provided in profusion for the men, and it is notorious that many young officers filled their cigar and cigarette cases every evening at the expense of some wealthy Jewish host. In a Christian salon such behaviour would have been impossible, but the Jew was always afraid that his guests might remember his mean origin, and gradually this grabbing of "free smokes" became a custom in certain circles.

But while this lavish extravagance may seem attractive for a time, it soon grows tiresome, for it brings with it a certain freedom of manners, especially, as I said before, among those who have abandoned their ancient faith. These individuals imagine that they are on the road to social triumph, and in order that they may not be cast down from the heights to which they have climbed

with so much difficulty they have begun to play the Anti-Semite—to dissimulate their origin and to profess contempt for their own people. By this means they think that their position is rendered secure, and filled with self-confidence their wantonness has become boundless.

When the Los von Rom was inaugurated by Germany, a movement to Germanise Austria by means of Lutheran Protestantism, this clique of false proselytes embraced the cause with enthusiasm. Their money was of no little service to the movement and by this means they gained ground in Austrian political circles. Thus the last decade before the war saw a new era of Jewish prosperity, this time a much more serious one than that of 1870, for they were no longer satisfied with knighthoods, but demanded baronetcies as the due reward of their patriotic labours.

The remunerative honours were even more liberally distributed in Hungary than in Austria, and this mushroom aristocracy became Count Tisza's stronghold. I am firmly convinced that the so-called Hungarians who

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in the present war have sold Hungary to the German Emperor are to be found almost exclusively among their ranks. For what do the Jews care who rules Austria? They are neither Austrians nor Hungarians, but, as I said before, a dangerous faction of the Austro-Hungarian community which is ready at any moment to sell the country of its adoption to the highest bidder.

Even the high military circles have now hob-nobbed with this class of wealthy and "converted" Jews, attracted no doubt by the length of their purses and the munificence of their hospitality. The salons of good-looking and smartly dressed Jewesses have become the favourite haunts of the younger staff officers. Madame, aided by these liaisons, has managed to secure a precarious foothold in a higher social sphere than that to which she belongs. Herr Hauptmann, captain of some regiment other than cavalry, or Herr Rittmeister, cavalry captain, enjoys the luxuries of his *belle amie's ménage* without expense to himself. He sits in her box at the theatre or the races, drives in her car,

has a place at her well-appointed table, accompanies her to fashionable restaurants and tea-places—in a word, he is her shadow and gets a lot of enjoyment out of life. You may ask “What does Madame’s husband say to this state of affairs?” Well, he is perfectly aware of the situation and acquiesces in it calmly; indeed he is often the instigator, and, pretending to suspect nothing, will boast of his own friendship with the captain through whose instrumentality he hopes to do a little climbing on his own account. It was common enough in Vienna before the war to meet husband and lover arm in arm on the promenade, absolutely cordial with one another and apparently quite unaware of any awkwardness in the position.

These liaisons were soon accepted as a natural development of the social order and scarcely even aroused comment among on-lookers. That the husband consoled himself elsewhere it is almost superfluous to add.

It was not long before corruption of this kind became the rule in all branches of society. The cost of living had increased to

such an extent that many householders were unable to keep pace with the times, and a triangular or quadrangular *ménage* offered an easy solution to impoverished husbands and wives. Thus it will be seen that the depraved state of Austrian society is not even based on human passion, but on the craving for those luxuries which would otherwise have been beyond the reach of so many.

When I was in Austria for the last time (in 1911) I rubbed my eyes in amazement. There was not one of the families I had known in former years who had not adopted this mode of life. I was astonished to find that the various husbands and wives with whom I had once been acquainted never seemed to remember to whom they were bound. And the freedom with which they carried on their illicit amours filled me with surprise.

In the high military circles this state of things was everywhere prevalent, and in almost every instance it might be traced to Jewish influences. So powerful had the Jews become that they were even beginning to show their teeth at Court. The following

little story may illustrate the extent to which their impudence has grown. The Archduke Frederic bought some property in one of the overseas colonies with a certain Herr Knopfelmacher, of Jewish birth, as intermediary. The commission due to this gentleman was some eight thousand pounds. The Archduke, not wishing to part with so large a sum of money, sent instead his autographed picture in a silver frame. Herr Knopfelmacher thanked his Imperial Highness for this honour, but at the same time begged to remind him of the commission that was still owing. Archduke Frederic made an excuse for refusing to pay the money. Upon this Herr Knopfelmacher took the photograph of the Archduke in its silver frame, wrapped it in a piece of paper and sent it back to the illustrious donor with a letter stating that he did not wish to possess either the picture or the signature of a man who cared so little about his word of honour. Perhaps this lesson served the Archduke right, but what has become of the Hapsburg prestige if such a thing as this can happen? And what will be the near future

of Austria if a man of Herr Knopfmacher's origin can dare to treat in such a cavalier fashion one of the most prominent members of the imperial house ?

It has been stated by historians that Poland's downfall was due to the predominating influence of the Jesuits and the Jews—God grant that Austria may not suffer a too similar fate.

VII. THE PEOPLE

FROM what I have said up to the present the reader will believe that not a grain of virtue is left in poor old Austria. But my remarks apply to the upper millions only. There exists a vast community with very valuable qualities, qualities which they possess in excess of any other country.

To begin with, the Austrian is a willing and hard-working individual, and, since industry is the blessing of men, this excellent characteristic has preserved him from downfall. But the Austrian has none of that assiduity which makes the German apply himself with the sole object of making money. No, money-making is the last aim of the Austrian. He has far too much of the artist's temperament, he works for the work's sake and possesses the big, generous heart of the true artist. For many years this artist has combined something

of German industry with the idealism of the Slav and the Latin love of art and beauty. Austria is in these days the one country where the old craftsman's love of his work still lingers. In Austria you find workmen who delight in their work for its own sake and not merely for the profit that accrues to them from it. A shop-keeper will display all his goods with pride to a person whom he knows has no intention of buying anything. Should such a one express regret that he is taking his trouble for nothing, he will reply : " Oh, I don't want you to buy ! It gives me such pleasure to show you my goods, I am so proud of our Austrian products." The other day I happened to accompany a friend of mine to her tailor. His name sounded anything but English ; it was a Slav name but not Russian, so I asked him to what nationality he belonged. He replied : " Czech, my lady, but I am here in England since 1888." He told me that he had served his apprenticeship in Vienna. His prices were exceedingly low and I could not resist the temptation of asking him how this came about. He

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answered: "The war, my lady. People cannot pay de high prices now. I could make more if I work khaki, but I lof ladee work. I have my son fighting with de Allies in de Czech battalion, so I do my bit any way."

Now that is the Austrian all over. In his manufactories he makes the most beautiful things that the world's market contains. He does not try to profit by them—he enjoys making them. His zeal is lavished in rendering them as beautiful as possible, when that is done his enthusiasm ceases. It is a fact that of the various goods imported into England before the war the useful and very often poorly made articles came from Germany, but all the beautiful and artistic things were made in Austria. Leather goods, cut glass, china, and those lovely thick carpets of every shade which seemed to suggest that one was walking on velvety green moss—all were masterpieces of handicraft, for the workmen made them with love. The Austrian is an artist, often a genius. But he hates the routine of everyday life, the fight for the squalid necessities of existence. He would

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rather go without his daily bread than abase himself to obtain it. Indeed he is almost too proud. He is too generous, too kind-hearted. The result is that the Austrian lower classes are only too easily exploited by the upper. The so-called gentleman makes his request in so engaging a manner that the poor man will go through fire and water to serve him. And in this friendly way the whole population of Austria has been kept in check so long.

German bullying does not exist here, and it is not difficult to imagine the effect that the bullying, brutal Prussians must have on this courteous people. In one way it was well for them that they should be brought into contact with them. It has opened their minds to the real facts. The scales are falling from their eyes. Now at last they begin to realise how shamefully they have been oppressed. So long as the orders of their tyrants were couched in suave words and punctuated with smiles these poor people were blind to the hardness of their lot. The comedy of graciousness covered the tragedy of callous cruelty. When they had to pay homage to the chiefs

of their districts—despots surrounded by diligent spies—they were too simple to recognise the tyrant beneath the mask of the good-tempered, smiling official. When on festive occasions they set out with bunting and music and the school-children were arrayed in white, their pleasure in the pageantry of the affair caused them to forget that they were acknowledging a power which existed in opposition to their most genuine convictions. But when the Prussian came and with the impudence of his race commanded that flags were to be waved and music played and children dressed in white, with no accompanying smile or gracious quip, then the Austrian people, when they had recovered from their first amazement, gradually became aware that the change which they detested lay in method rather than in practice. They realise now that all these years they have existed in a kind of torpor under an oppression the extent of which is now at last revealed to them. The moment cannot be far off in which they will understand that this is the crucial moment in their history, and they will rise united in

devotion to a common cause—the freedom for which they have so long yearned in secret.

It was this idealism, this genius as it were, that prevented the people of Austria from awakening before. They were too poor, their means were too limited to allow of their development, to permit them to be aware of their own value. Their light-heartedness, their inherent frugality made them easily satisfied, and so long as they could sit at the table of an inn or café and hear a little music all their needs seemed to be supplied.

In Austria, unlike other countries, you can go to a café or tavern for a little refreshment and stay as long as you like. People go, for instance, at about five o'clock and order a "melange," which consists of a large glass of perfect café au lait with abundance of cream on top and which costs about fourpence, and on the strength of this munificent order they can stay till seven o'clock or even later. They sit in groups of six or eight at a table. all friends together, for no one would take a seat among strangers. The café is the rendezvous of the lower middle class in town,

and also the only means which the peasantry have for social intercourse. Rich people are not supposed to visit these resorts, though the food is almost invariably excellent as well as inexpensive.

Should a foreigner have the curiosity to visit one of these cafés on several consecutive days he would invariably find the same people there each day, and were he to continue his visits for months it would be the same thing. Probably he would come to the conclusion that these people were extraordinarily frivolous, but really the frivolity does not go very deep. The public in the afternoon consists mainly of women, in the evening of men, and upon investigation he would find that there is a good reason for the frequenting of these places by the people. Rents in Austrian large towns, especially in Vienna, are terribly high. All the people, with the exception of the high nobility, live in flats. Only the great aristocracy inhabit mansions of a size unknown in English towns and more of the Italian palazzo type. The flats in which the rest of humanity live are

of all sizes, some contain more than twenty rooms and some one room and a kitchen. The rents vary according to size and quarter, but the cheapest rate in Vienna for one kitchen and a bedroom is ten shillings a week.

A family of four or five with one maid often reside in a flat consisting of one large and two small bedrooms, dining-room, and kitchen. For that the head of the house will have to pay at least fifty pounds a year, and such a flat at that price could only be found in a mediocre quarter of the town on the second or third floor of a very old house in which the drainage is bad, no means of lighting are provided beyond the use of petrol lamps, and which will contain no bathroom and no water except a common source of supply on the landing of the staircase. A flat in the same quarter but in a new house with electric light and water laid on in the flat, but no bathroom, would cost about seventy pounds. Thus a family that has to maintain itself on an income of £200 or £250 a year—and there are heaps of respectable people whose incomes do not exceed that amount—

will have to make extraordinary sacrifices to be able to pay such a rent. As a rule people of this class keep one little servant maid who receives perhaps six pounds a year in return for such services as an undersized girl of fifteen can render. All the housework therefore which requires any degree of skill has to be undertaken by the mother of the family.

Yet these people are of a cheery disposition and rarely inveigh against the fate which has made their life so hard, though inwardly they may be longing for some change from the long, dull round of trivial duties by which they are enslaved. Their homes are too small, their surroundings too sordid to encourage cheerfulness. The children enjoy somewhat better atmospheric conditions during their school hours, for the school buildings are generally large and commodious with excellent hygienic arrangements. The fathers have intercourse with other men at their places of employment, but the poor hard-working mother has no moment of leisure during the day, and even if she had could not afford to entertain her friends to so

much as a social cup of tea. Here the café comes in, for she can go there in the afternoon and drink a cup of coffee and have a chat with her friends who are living under the same conditions.

In fact the café takes the place of the Club—and more, it has to make up for the deficiencies of the home. Since accommodation is so limited that often one of the children is obliged to sleep on a couch in the dining-room, in the evening papa also has to choose between his bed and the café as a place of refuge. This is particularly the case on Sundays. It follows that gradually the café has become a habit, a habit which has even taken root among those who possess better homes but lack the means to entertain. It is a less expensive way of indulging in social intercourse and involves far less trouble for the housekeeper.

The custom of treating is unknown. People simply go to the café to meet their friends. In summer the coffee garden replaces the café. There on Sundays one may see whole families whose incomes vary from £300 or

£400 a year to the twenty shillings a week which is the average pay of the working-man. All these have come on a pilgrimage from homes which are not pleasant enough to compete with the attractions of the public gardens. In England most of these people would possess small houses or cottages with little gardens attached in which they could take their ease and receive their friends. Other refreshments beside coffee are to be obtained in these places, ices are provided in the better-class gardens and beer and cheese in the others. But everywhere the same atmosphere prevails, an atmosphere free from care, impregnated with innocent light-heartedness, proceeding from people who are taking their life, hard as it is, without grumbling and rejoicing in their rare moments of relaxation.

There are two places of special attraction in Vienna—the Prater and Schönbrunn. The latter is the residence of the Emperor and is on the outskirts of the capital, for it is only on rare occasions that he is in residence at the Hofburg, his town palace. The park,

which contains the Zoological Gardens, is open to the public and admittance is free. Hence Schönbrunn is the goal of many a Viennese child. But the Prater is the more popular; it was originally the imperial hunting-ground near the capital, but at that time Vienna was much smaller than it is to-day, for the Prater can scarcely be said to be on the outskirts of the city at the present time. These grounds were given to the public by the Emperor Josef, who, as I said before, could never do enough to alleviate the hardships of mankind. The gift was a source of great annoyance to the nobility, who until then had alone enjoyed the privilege of rambling in these grounds, and it is said that one nobleman even dared to complain to the Emperor about his act of generosity. "Where shall we go now if we wish to move in the society of our equals? That was the only place where we could be exclusive!" the dismayed aristocrat exclaimed bitterly. "If I wished to confine myself to the company of my equals, dear friend," replied the Emperor, "I am afraid I should have to take

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my recreation in the imperial crypt. There is only one Emperor in the country so far as I know!" So the beautiful forest remained open for all time.

The greater part retains its original character, but some of it has undergone changes. In process of time it has been divided into the Volks-Prater and Nobel-Prater; not that one part is prohibited to either class, but gradually it became the custom for the aristocracy to enjoy their drives and rides on horseback in one section of the Park, while merry-go-rounds, cheap theatres, swings, and restaurant gardens delighted the common herd in the other section. This quarter is the same to-day as it was fifty years ago, and time has effected no modification of the usage. In some of the cheap restaurants dancing is permitted, but those who avail themselves of the privilege have to pay a farthing per dance. These little "hops" are the special rendezvous of soldiers and servant-maids. The other side has altered its original aspect, for the motor-car has changed the fashion. It is no longer the tip-top of "chic" to drive

in a carriage and pair with coachman and footman on the box, and the Prater is too near Vienna to be useful as a goal for motorists. Only one resort has remained—the Krieau, a kind of farm situated in an isolated position in the most countrified part of the Prater. This is much frequented by society people, especially on racing days, as it is very near the race-course of the Freudenau. Twenty years ago it was the favourite haunt of all who aspired to gain a footing in Society, as it lay at such a distance from the capital that horses and carriages were required to convey people to it.

Until the beginning of this war Vienna possessed in her fiacres the finest hired-out horse-vehicles in the world. The Viennese fiacre was famous everywhere, and no equal could be found of the Viennese driver. The “Fiacre-Kutscher” was a personage, a typical Austrian product—the embodiment of the Slav-Magyar-Italian-German mixture. His manner was always extremely polite, until you attempted to bargain with him. As a rule he was a man inclined to corpulency, due

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to his sedentary life and the amount of good beer he was in the habit of consuming. He was the type of Austrian light-heartedness. When the motor-car appeared his prestige declined, but he was such a favourite with the people that he was kept up as a kind of religious institution. I am afraid that the year 1914 must have seen the end of his long and happy reign, for horses were scarce and needed for the Army, and with him one of the most characteristic relics of dear old Vienna has gone to the grave.

Dear old Vienna ! Still some traces of you may be found in your more remote corners, where one may wander on a quiet summer's day through broad streets with grey stone buildings, none of them more than three stories high, with flowers blossoming in every window. Here one may catch from afar the strains of some quartette of strolling musicians playing in a courtyard, to whom the maids throw their coppers wrapped up in paper. The word "Laudongasse" will recall this picture to many an American and English student.

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These musicians are also an old Viennese tradition. Many of them are really excellent performers and might have become great artists had fortune willed. But nowhere perhaps is it harder to gain prominence in the musical world than it is in Vienna ; there is too much competition, the Austrians are all so highly musical. All the greatest music is Austrian in origin or by virtue of the influence that produced it. Even Beethoven and Brahms, both German by birth, lived, worked, and died in Austria. Mozart, Schubert, Haydn were born there. And in lighter music who does not know the Blue Danube waltz by the immortal Strauss ? Where would English musical comedy be without the waltzes of Lehar, composer of " The Merry Widow," " The Count of Luxembourg," and " Gipsy Love " ? And what would our parade bands and barrel organs do without the " Chocolate Soldier " and " Waltz Dream " of Oscar Strauss ?

A people capable of inspiring music which reaches so high a pitch of excellence in such varied forms cannot be on the decline. But

it is only in a country where life can be taken gaily that such music will be created ; it is the expression of the Austrian soul—the soul that rises above all sordidness, above the pettiness of everyday life, above (of course) reality.

From the same source arises the charm, that magnetic charm of the Austrian which makes it impossible for any one to regard him as an enemy. It is difficult to believe that such people could hate, that in acting spitefully they could be obeying the promptings of their own natural instincts.

I have described the introduction of Bradi's Wintergarden in an earlier chapter. At the beginning it was merely a pleasure resort like many others. The Grinzinger Quartette had a restaurant of the same kind, the Gartenbau Gesellschaft another, and there were many more. What was the chief attraction at all these places ? Music ! Gay Viennese music. There was not a particle of vicious frivolity about them, nothing but quite innocent and genuine pleasure, and many a song which later on has been spread

abroad and obtained a world-wide fame has issued from these more or less humble resorts. The Capelle Drescher, which in later years took up its abode in Manchester after travelling over the whole of Great Britain, was originally nothing more than one of the many string bands so well known in Austria.

The changes which have been introduced into these places are largely due to foreign influence. It suddenly occurred to the Viennese that in comparison with other European capitals their town received far too few visitors ; they came to believe that they were too “*klein städtisch*” [provincial] for the wide-travelled tourist and tried with all their might to become “*gross städtisch*” [metropolitan]. The transformation was not a reformation. Personally I do not believe the tourist was much attracted by this process of modernisation, while the Viennese themselves tried to live up to the new conditions and lost in the effort much of their charming ingenuousness. And in spite of all what was it that made Bradi's famous and thus gave the lead to the inauguration of a

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new era ? Again a song, a mere song ! Its first words were : “ Those who have no money, stay at home ” [“ Kinder ! Wer ka Geld hat der bleibt z’Haus ”]; neither luxury, champagne, nor women could have done what that one little song achieved. “ Tout Vienne ” made a pilgrimage to Bradi’s to hear it !

God grant that the trial through which the Austrian people are passing at this moment may lead them back to the road from which they threatened to go astray ! May they return to their old good-natured kind-heartedness when once the dark clouds which were oppressing them for years will have given place to the bright sunshine of the prosperity which has been too long withheld from them. And when at last peace and justice reign over these dear people it will only be necessary to touch the main string of their sensitive souls to bring them back to themselves.

One little song and all will be well again.

VIII. A FEW WORDS ON EDUCATION

AS I was educated myself in Austria and am bringing up my own children in England, it is an easy task for me to compare the two methods. Of course, when I was a child the education of a girl was not considered a very serious matter by her parents, for marriage, just as in England, was regarded as her only proper career, though the Austrian girl of the better class made a more serious study of French and English than the English girl did of French and German. In other respects the education in both countries reached very much the same standard.

The difference between English and Austrian education became more marked when the girls attained the age of sixteen. While in England at that age they stayed on at boarding-school, learning very little except

sports, painting, and music, Austrian girls, like those of most other European countries, were initiated into the arts of housekeeping with special attention to cookery—not, be it understood, in cooking classes, but in their own homes. For no Austrian cook would dare to exclude her mistress or the daughters of the house from the kitchen. The women of Austria, no matter what their rank, can cook a decent meal, and indeed would be ashamed to acknowledge to their servants that they did not understand every detail of the culinary art. Yet the Austrian woman, in spite of her talent as a Hausfrau, is not, like her German cousin, in any wise a Philistine; she is generally a well-read and often a very entertaining person.

But since my childhood such an immense change has passed over the education of girls in every country of the world that I dare not attempt to raise too many points of comparison. It is quite a different case with boys. For them the system of education has undergone scarcely any change. The children of the masses go to school up to the age

of fourteen and there is very little difference between the instruction of girls and of boys. There are eight standards through which they can pass if they are sufficiently intelligent. The first five are called the *Volks-schule*, and all children high and low must pass through these five courses of instruction. The remaining three standards form the *Bürger-schule* which until twenty years ago had to be passed by girls of all classes, but, in the case of boys, were only compulsory for those of the lowest rank. In the middle and higher classes of the community a boy, after having passed through the first five forms would, at the age of ten, enter the *Gymnasium* or classical school, at which Greek and Latin are essential studies and where he receives his first preparation for the university. Or he can go to the *Real-schule*, where drawing and arithmetic are the most important subjects and English and French are substituted for Greek and Latin. In these schools boys are prepared for the engineering profession. The *Gymnasium* has eight forms, the *Real-schule* seven.

“ My eight years at the Gymnasium will remain in my memory as the hardest and most troublesome period of my whole life,” said an Austrian to me once here in London. He was a man of about forty who had certainly experienced many worries and troubles since his schooldays, yet nothing in his opinion could be compared with the hardships he had undergone as a youth. Is it not really a tragedy that this time which ought to remain in one’s memory as the brightest and happiest of one’s life should be thus strained? For this man was only expressing the opinion of thousands and thousands of his fellow-countrymen.

What a contrast does the school-time of an English boy present! It is true that until quite recently the average English schoolboy was allowed to take his studies too lightly, yet even this under-study was less detrimental to the development of his character than over-study. Indeed, the example of Austria should be a warning to English and American pedagogues. Over-strenuous brain-work in early youth must inevitably be followed by

brain-fatigue, and, though it may be considered a rather bold statement, yet I do assert that the average man in Austria with an academic education behind him lacks energy, has lost independence of character and with it much of his sense of responsibility. He gets into the habit of depending on his books, and the moment a situation arises which demands cool common sense he is helplessly at a loss.

A very amusing incident occurred in 1911 during my stay at Feldaffing, which affords an apt illustration of what I have said. Among the other hotel guests was a young Viennese woman with a son of the same age as my own whom I had left in Canada. Every afternoon during the hot summer weather this poor child was coached by his mother, and as their rooms adjoined mine on the left-hand side and in the fervour of her instructions her voice would often be raised, I frequently played the part of an involuntary audience. I must confess that my motherly pride sank to a very low ebb, for this boy had to solve arithmetical problems which I

should have found difficult, and certainly my own son would have appeared a veritable dunce in comparison. A few days after I first heard these lessons the little boy was sent out to buy some plain note-paper. His mother had given him a fifty-pfennig piece [sixpence] and he was told to purchase twenty-five pfennigs' worth of paper and bring back the change. He brought the paper, but the change was incorrect and he could not account for the mistake, as he had no idea what was the price of the paper and had never even counted the change when it was handed to him! "Well," I thought to myself, "my boy might not be able to cope with your acrobatic calculations, but he would know how to use his common sense if he were sent on an errand with sixpence to buy three pennyworth of paper." Austrian men in general are in the same condition as that poor little lad—they have not been trained to use their common sense.

But what is far worse than even this cramming and over-study is the unsatisfactory state of the relations between teachers and

pupils. Schools in Austria are all Government institutions and consequently the teachers are appointed by the State. They hold office for life with rather poor pay, varying from £100 to £200 a year, and an old-age pension. But since the master is in Government employ he at once considers himself a bureaucrat and gives himself airs befitting, as he thinks, his position. The Gymnasium as well as the Real-schule is staffed by men alone, and as a rule they are bullies and very ill-tempered. Their lot is not an enviable one; they have to teach about fifty boys at once and some of their pupils have very hard heads. The boys are in a constant state of anxiety, while the master does all in his power to thwart the instincts of youth. There is nothing of the friendly intercourse that exists between an English schoolmaster and his pupils. The Herr Professor of an Austrian school is a dreaded being, a kind of ill-tempered bull-dog. A little incident may illustrate how ingrained in them is this unfriendliness.

A man who for many years had lived

abroad came back to Vienna for a short visit. As he was one day passing the school building in which he had once been so long chafed and harassed, a feeling of curiosity inspired him to look inside it. He strolled into the yard and from that made his way into one of the long passages. But his little perambulation was soon interrupted; a man evidently, to judge from his appearance, a school professor, stopped him and asked what he wanted. The intruder tried to explain that he had spent eight precious years of his life within these walls and that curiosity had led him to pay this little call.

“That has nothing to do with me,” the uncouth fellow replied; “I am the headmaster now, and no stranger can be admitted. I don’t care who you are!”

The former student hurriedly beat a retreat without any further comment, but his experience shows the spirit in which Austrian schools are conducted. It is unnecessary to contrast this man’s action with that of an English head master. Every one who reads these pages will know the kind of reception

an old student, interested enough to visit his former place of instruction, would receive from any head master in England.

Yes, in the schools of Austria German bullying has indeed made itself at home.

I heard some one say the other day that Austrians had no sense of humour. At first I was extremely indignant, for of course the Austrian by nature is exceptionally humorous, and, as a literal statement, the assertion is absurd. At the same time there is no doubt that certain classes of Austrians are deficient in this respect and among them must be numbered the members of the lower bureaucracy. Their sense of humour is destroyed by their life of dissimulated poverty, and no doubt the schoolmaster has lost his in the same way. For the most part he is an embittered man, and having often spent some of his educational years in Germany he has learned to cloak his ill-temper by a habit of bullying. Also it is probable that the system is encouraged by the Government. The authorities do not want to bring up bright,

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intelligent, free-thinking men. In a country where a régime of oppression is essential to the ruling classes, it is certainly by malice aforethought that this system of oppression is brought to bear even upon the children of the nation. But not only is the child kept down to make his spirit weak and submissive, but the young man is also hindered in his career by regulations, which he must satisfy before he attains full independence. A lawyer after emerging from the University, at the age of twenty-three at the earliest, must serve seven years as a so-called concipient in a law office before he is allowed to establish himself. His pay is about fifty or sixty pounds a year. The man who has studied as much law as is obligatory for a high Government career must be to obtain a position at least twenty-two years of age, and must then serve two years in a Government department for nothing. He receives one shilling "ink money" per month. After that for several years varying from two to five he gets thirty to fifty pounds a year, and by the time he is thirty he will enjoy the

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lordly salary of £100 to £150 per annum. A doctor who wishes to be successful must fill the post of assistant to a State hospital in one of the larger cities. While he is there his pay is next to nothing, but, as he has to live in, his expenses are not very large. He too is well over thirty before he can start on his own. Engineers and architects are less restricted, but like men of all other professions are very late in starting for themselves. No man is considered to be of full age much before thirty. While in other countries a young man of twenty-five is regarded as a man, in Austria he would be looked upon as a mere youth. Hence the men themselves have learnt not to consider themselves of responsible age until they are thirty ; they believe that all kinds of foolish tricks are still their prerogative while in reality they should have sowed their wild oats long ago. Moreover, many of them still live on papa's money and thus have no opportunity of learning its real value. If, on the other hand, their parents are poor, their poverty only too often embitters them and

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brings them under the influence of others who can help them.

To the category of the embittered belong the school-teachers, so that very often one can scarcely wonder at their fiery tempers ; the hard necessities of life have rendered them harsh.

Naturally if the Austrians regard a man under thirty as a mere stripling the national tendency towards frivolity is easily explained. The years of irresponsibility are so enormously extended for just that class from which should issue the leaders of the nation.

But this system of keeping the youth of Austria back is deliberately conceived. It is to the interest of the governing classes that these young people should not be too anxious to intrude into the realm of practical affairs, and thus it is as if they would drain the sap of the best trees in the Austrian forest.

So as everywhere else, here too the hour is striking in which the hierarchical monument of Humanity, hidden under the cloak of thoroughness and culture, must speedily be rebuilt.

IX. THE PEASANTRY

I HAVE compared the Austrian monarchy to an old ruined house, and the description of this edifice would be most incomplete did I omit to mention the peasantry. It would mean that I was neglecting the only part of the building that is perfectly sound and free from any indications of decay, for the peasants of Austria, more perhaps than those of any other country, are fine people. They are vigorous and sane both in body and soul, and may deservedly be called the pride of the monarchy. Take the Czechs, the Poles, the Moravians in the north, or the Slovaks, the Italians, the Vends in the south, the Hungarians in the east, the Lower Austrians in the centre, the Upper Austrians and Tyrolese in the west—they all bear the hall-mark of a clean, pure, and honest spirit. They are kind-hearted, hard-working, and take little interest in politics, being chiefly occupied in

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the honest toil entailed on them by the necessity for earning their daily bread. Still very naïve, they live a life of their own, untouched by Western civilisation, and yet on a higher grade than the Eastern races of the near Orient.

Naturally there are distinctions between the different nationalities. For instance, the hardest working of all is undoubtedly the Czech; he is perhaps the finest type of peasant that exists to-day, and consequently excites a good deal of jealousy among other Austrians. He is a shrewd, clever fellow, the most advanced of all the Slav peasantry including even the Russian and Balkan peasants of Slav origin. He possesses a good share of humour and must impress the foreigner as a very droll specimen; yet his spirits are volatile, he can drop from the height of gaiety to the depth of depression in a few minutes. In this respect he differs from the peasants of the Crown lands, who are invariably light-hearted and have not the slightest tendency to melancholy. A Czech woman will weep six times to a Crownlander's once, but on the other hand the Crownlander

will fall into constant rages for nothing, while the Czech is seldom seen to lose his temper. Yet the Crownlander will forget the cause of his anger almost before he has recovered from its effects, while the Czech will cherish a grudge for a very long time, and indeed will never allow it to pass entirely out of his mind. Dreaminess and melancholy are common to all Slav peoples, but I think this resentfulness is a special characteristic of the Czech.

The Poles and the other Slav races in Austria may be regarded as coming between the Crownlander and the Czech. They are neither quite so energetic nor so industrious as the latter, nor do they bubble over with lightheartedness so readily as the Crownlander. The Hungarian is the easiest peasant to move and the most impulsive. He is very enthusiastic, very hard-working, and perhaps the most primitive type to be found among the Austro-Hungarian peasantry. He probably suffers most at this moment, for one of his essential faculties is his keenness of mental perception involving the possibility of that intense mental suffering which is always so

much more acute than any physical pain. Let me give an example to illustrate my meaning : in this terrible phase through which we are now living the Crownlander remains comparatively calm, almost indifferent until he feels the pressure of physical want. (This trait, by the way, is not only peculiar to the Crownlander.) Meantime the Hungarians and the Slavs have already suffered in their anticipation of future misery, in their agony at the degradation through which their country is passing. Spiritually they are more highly developed ; they scent the coming danger, there is no necessity to bring it under their eyes. It is much easier to dupe the Crownlander, he is much more patient, much too credulous, and quite willing to believe what he is told until the bare facts stare him in the face. But with all these peasants, in whatever state of development, their revolt will be terrible when the day of reckoning arrives.

It is curious that these people, in spite of their different characteristics, have so many of the same customs and habits and so much in common in their mode of life. Their food

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is the same everywhere ; smoked and home-cured bacon with dumplings made of bread and flour, and cabbage fermented in salt called "Sauerkraut," form the basis of their winter diet. Boiled beef, lettuce, potatoes, and similar dumplings constitute their main dish during the summer months for their midday meal. At all other times of the day *café au lait* is served in large bowls, holding at least a pint, with dry black rye bread ; white bread is a luxury reserved for special occasions, so is butter, which is saved for consumption by the townspeople. They eat large quantities of food at a time, but are very particular as regards its quality, and in this respect their habits are at variance with those of the other classes in Austria. While the German is reputed to eat in large quantities with little discrimination as to quality, the Austrian, with the exception of the peasant, is a gourmet and his fastidiousness increases with his means.

To serve a lunch or dinner which is not perfect in every detail would be a disgrace to any hostess. Even in ordinary life the

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food is excellent and varied, and dinner is quite a vital question in the household. So I consider that any foreign girl who should marry an Austrian ought to become an expert cook if she wishes to forestall disaster. But while we are on the subject of marriage I would like to say a few words of warning. Austrian men, charming, distinguished, and cultivated as they may be, certainly do not make desirable husbands on the whole. Their education is so unpractical that they are incapable of grasping the full responsibility that a man takes on his shoulders when he enters into the bonds of matrimony. So many of them are accustomed to having their affairs managed by other people that only too often they expect the young wife to take the greater share of the responsibility on her shoulders, and this shifting of the burden leads not infrequently to misfortune.

I must apologise for having drifted away from my original theme, but sympathy for my sisters diverted the course of my pen.

To return to the subject of the peasants; their men, unlike those of the higher classes,

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make excellent husbands. There is very little drunkenness among them beyond an occasional outburst on a Sunday, for their chief beverage is wine or beer according to the district, and spirits are absolutely unknown.

Both men and women are extremely early risers, in summer they get up as early as three o'clock and in winter not later than five. The peasant generally owns a freehold property instead of renting his land like the English farmer, and this fact probably accounts for his addiction to hard work. He has no landlord, no one beside himself whose interest it is to keep the ground fertile and the roof in good repair. To be able to meet all his expenses he must work hard at his sowing and reaping. In process of years this condition of affairs has made him ambitious and proud, so that to-day he would not exchange a small cottage and a few acres of his own for an estate with house and stables which would only be leased to him. This it is which has made him such a fine fellow; he has something of his own to work for, something he can improve. The home, which

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some day will go to his son and his grandchildren, is the object of his whole life. His wife is his comrade in the struggle, she works almost as hard as her husband; and perhaps here we may find a proof that strenuous physical labour does not impair a woman's health or hinder the functions of childbirth. For the peasant's family is always a large one; it is an essential part of his fortune. Farm hands are necessary for the development of his land, and the payment of wages would be a serious drain on a peasant proprietor's resources, but there are always sufficient dumplings and bread with which to feed the little urchin. While for the most part it is the man's work to plough and reap in the fields, it is madame's task to run the home and take the goods to market. Only the big deals such as the sale of grain or stock are transacted by the husband, who drives to market a few times a year. The merchandising of the smaller items such as butter, geese, fowls, and cheese, which are sold every week, comes within the wife's sphere.

Knowing nothing of the Rights of Woman,

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ignorant of the Suffrage question, she regards it as a natural thing for her to carry her goods herself, neatly laid out in a large round basket on her head. This she balances by means of a little cushion, and thus laden walks miles and miles up and down hill. It never occurs to her for a moment to resent the fact that her husband would not dream of going to market in such a manner. He of course must drive—that is his natural privilege. No doubt in that way the peasantry are still very backward, though the men treat their wives decently, and in their homes, within their own walls, they are on equal terms, and very often the woman is the chief authority.

In Bohemia, Moravia, and Northern Hungary the women carry their goods to market in a hood made of basketwork, which hangs on their backs. They are so accustomed to carrying everything on their backs that even their children are slung in a shawl and fastened round the mother's neck. It is not at all unusual to meet a peasant woman trudging along the road with two or three little fair heads peeping out from the safe recesses of mother's wrap.

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Of course none of them wear hats, but coloured or black scarves pinned or fastened in various ways. Unfortunately the typical head-dresses of former years are rapidly disappearing.

But hard-working as the Austro-Hungarian peasant is he looks upon his pleasures and amusements as of vital importance. To spend Sunday as his confrères in England and Scotland do would appear to him the very depth of misery. "What is the use of working hard all the week," he would say, "if a man can't have a bit of fun on Sunday?" They attend Mass punctiliously at the beginning of the day, but when that is over their time is their own. First they meet in the little market-place, then they take a stroll to an inn near by where they sit and gossip for an hour, returning thence to their own homes for dinner. In the afternoon not a single husband remains indoors, for as every village has once a year its special "Kirchtag" (a kind of Sunday fair) there is always in the vicinity some place of gaiety to which the whole family can repair. One can see from this how deep-rooted in the subjects of the Austro-Hun-

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garian monarchy is the instinct which leads them to seek their amusement in public places, and that the difference between the citizen and the peasant is only a difference in the quality of the place of entertainment which he frequents. The townsman goes to the café, the countryman to the inn, and this applies also to their wives and children. The fact that a man takes his pleasure in the company of his family provides an excellent guarantee for his good behaviour.

In these inns too they have their music, generally supplied by the so-called "veterans," who are not aged warriors as the term suggests, but merely soldiers who have finished their military duties.

All the peasantry are Roman Catholics everywhere and very fervent. Their ignorance concerning religion is almost incredible and their intolerance fanatical and indiscriminating. A man who is not a Catholic is in their eyes a heathen, and life in a village for such a person would be insupportable. But we must not blame the people for this bigotry; there is no one whose business it

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is to lift them out of their darkness, and as apparently they are free, they do not realise that their thoughts are still in bondage. As everywhere else in Austria so here too the invisible power of the Church holds them captive. It is not even in the power of an individual priest to change their way of thought, for should one of them try to bring enlightenment to his parish he would at once be relentlessly removed from it.

The morals of the peasants are consequently somewhat peculiar. One never hears of an untrue wife or a faithless husband, but, on the other hand, it is difficult to find a girl who has not borne an illegitimate child. Often the lovers of these unmarried mothers are quite without the means to marry and support them, and would make indifferent husbands if they were able to do so; generally they have still to pass through their three years' military service. When the parents discover the condition of their daughter the matter is soon settled; the young mother *in spe* gets a sound hiding from her father and then he yields with a good grace to the in-

evitable consequences of her misdemeanour. And since an extra child in a peasant's home is a welcome asset, its arrival is not really very much begrudged, and the question of its illegitimacy is generally waved aside. When the mother marries after a few years, not as a rule her first lover, the husband quite willingly adopts this "child of sin" as it would be termed in a more strait-laced community. Indeed in some parts, the Northern Tyrol for instance, the men rather like to marry a girl with a child, as they have then a proof before their eyes that their future wife will be able to provide them with the little farmhands whose assistance is so eagerly desired. As a rule too a woman who has had an experience of this kind becomes a more docile mistress of her new household.

It is a question of naïveté rather than immorality, and there is no one to teach these simple people a more enlightened code. Not infrequently Herr Pfarrer [Mr. Priest] is himself the father of at least one of these little intruders, but even if he lives a perfectly clean and pious life his practice is not

enough, for his precept is curtailed. He must not be too harsh with his little flock, since the people must remain in the belief that the Roman Catholic Church is the freest of all. One sees the difference between the two régimes by comparing the restricted Catholic priest of Austria with his brother in Ireland ; the Irish priest is encouraged to preach morality—indeed, morality is his stronghold. The British people are morally the highest in the world, hence the Church has no fear of falling into disfavour because it inculcates the doctrine of social purity. Besides, the village priest in Austria-Hungary is generally a man who has only received his “first consecration,” and can never rise to any higher position in the Church, because his education has been too limited. Often he is the second son of a rich peasant whose life’s ambition is crowned in seeing his child ordained. And these young ignorant priests are mostly so proud and self-satisfied that they consider they are entitled to a certain amount of moral licence. It is a common saying among them when they are attacked on this

subject, "We have vowed not to marry, but we are not monks."

While in many ways the present condition of Austria recalls that of France before the Revolution, the life of the peasantry is quite different. Modern times have freed them from serfdom, and even in a state of villeinage the Austrian peasant was never so poor as the French serf. There are, of course, at this moment side by side with the rich peasants a large number whose means are very small, but there is no real destitution—even the poorest has his small cottage, his cow, and the few acres of land which keep him above water. The conditions of their life are not gloomy and they are infinitely better off than the people of their own level in towns. If it were not that they are sunk in a kind of mental stagnation which causes them to stand aside from the onward march of humanity, their lot would be comparatively more enviable than that of any other subjects of the Emperor. Could they only be enlightened in their ideas they would become the mainstay of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

X. THE AUSTRIAN COURT

SO much has been written, so much said, and so much invented on the subject of the Austrian Court that it is rather an ungrateful task, which I have set myself, to add anything to the pile of matter that already exists. For the sphere of the Austrian Court is dull and restricted; its etiquette is based on narrow-minded traditions, it belongs to an age and a state of affairs that are singularly out of date in this twentieth century.

Only the other day an Englishwoman said to me: "You must admit, Countess, that in no other royal or imperial house have so many members expressed their desire, and in many instances fulfilled it, of breaking with their family traditions and giving up their rights and titles in order to marry the people for whom they have really cared."

My first impression was that this statement was absolutely true, but looking at it from a broader point of view I can see that the assertion is inaccurate if Austria be considered in relation to the other Courts of Europe.

The imperial family of Austria consists of nearly a hundred members, for the Hapsburgs are the only royal family in which all the junior branches bear the same title as the sons and brothers of the Emperor. An example will illustrate my meaning. In England the cousins of the King have titles of their own; their descendants have already intermarried in the second generation with the aristocracy. For instance, if the present Prince Arthur of Connaught, the nephew of King Edward VII and grandson of Queen Victoria, had had three sons the first would have succeeded to his father's title, but the second and third would have had other titles, to which their eldest sons would in process of time have succeeded, but their second and third sons would have borne no title indicating princely rank, and would have been perfectly free to spend their lives accord-

ing to their own inclinations and to marry the women of their choice. Nobody would be scandalised, and the wives as a matter of course would have taken their husbands' name and title. In Austria these men would still be Archdukes and obliged to suffer all the restrictions of their rank, simply because a century ago or more one of their remote ancestors happened to be an Emperor. Yet they themselves are much too far from the throne ever to have any chance of attaining imperial suzerainty, and are thus compelled to support a burden which brings them no material compensation whatsoever.

Indeed it is astonishing that there are not more cases of rebellion ; considering the size of the imperial family the proportion of " strikers " is remarkably small. Did such a state of affairs (let us suppose for the sake of comparison) exist in England I am convinced that the crop of revolutionaries would be much larger—indeed, I cannot imagine any English nobleman acquiescing in conditions of this nature:

What, then, is the cause of the submissive

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attitude of the imperial house of Austria ? [It will be seen from my question that I hold an exactly opposite opinion from that of my friend. Though the Austrian imperial family may in other countries be regarded as rebellious, I maintain on the contrary that it is extraordinarily meek, otherwise some change would have been forced upon it from within.]

Archdukes as well as Archduchesses are from their earliest childhood systematically trained to distrust real human sentiments. The theory is inculcated into the little Archduke's infant mind that he is a unique being to whom the ordinary laws that govern human nature do not apply. He is assured that he is of purer blood than any other royal personage in Europe. He is made to believe that in a world of parvenus he is the sole survivor of a race of kings. He must not listen to the promptings of such good human instincts as sympathy, friendship, faithfulness, and generosity ; these might serve the turn of a Baron or a Count, but they are not " fit for a Hapsburg." This magic phrase is re-

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peated at every crisis in his childhood, it is the golden rule and the determinating argument at every juncture in his youth. Even I myself in my secluded upbringing was persecuted with this phrase: "Remember," I was told, "to put to yourself this question before every one of your actions—'Is this worthy of an Archduchess?'" Happily, through the extraordinary cast of chance I have had an opportunity of developing on more generous lines, but what would have happened to me had I remained in the atmosphere of this Court? The few who have had sufficient will power to throw off the fetters of its traditions have by their rebellion proved that they possessed extraordinary strength of character. Indeed, if they have failed, the blame can hardly be laid upon them; the fact that they were strong enough to revolt does not imply that they had the practical wisdom which their education has given them no chance to cultivate. All their life they have been wrapped in swaddling clothes.

The greatest danger and misfortune of the

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unhappy house of Hapsburg is this system of education, which is bound to produce unintelligent men and women totally unfit for the practical business of life. The royal children are never allowed to have friends, they are never left long in the company of any one tutor or governess for fear he or she might gain undue influence over them. From babyhood they have a household consisting of five or six persons, with servants in addition to do the menial work of their apartments, and the child is never permitted to choose its own attendant, but must always be accompanied by that member of its staff who happens to be on duty for the moment. The poor children are so bored by this arrangement that they only deem themselves happy when they are rid of everybody and alone. Thus they gradually lose all faith in humanity and in the end take no interest in any person or thing—certainly none in sociological or political questions. Once grown up they are purposely introduced to a life of licentiousness ; if they have no vicious tastes their only resources are bigotry and intrigue. Utterly

enervated, they have not as a rule the energy to extricate themselves from this net of tradition, and fall entirely into the hands of a few courtiers and councillors, who pull the strings of State for their own advantage.

In this way the Countess Sophie Chotec, the tool of the Jesuits, gained complete control over Franz Ferdinand, a creature weak, unnerved, morally decadent, and already somewhat under their influence. But the Duchess of Hohenberg—to use her later title—had reckoned without the counter faction existing at the Court; its leaders were the Prince Montenuovo and Count Æhrenthal. Human lives are of little importance in the eyes of these people, who would have no compunction at a critical moment in removing their opponent from the scene of action. Æhrenthal was Chotec's, and thus indirectly Franz Ferdinand's, victim, Chotec and Franz Ferdinand became the victims of Prince Montenuovo and his faction, and recently Count Berchtold, the man who had been nominated by Count Æhrenthal himself as his successor, has been appointed

chief adviser to the new heir Karl Franz Josef, screened under the position of Grand Master to his private household. This means that Æhrenthal's policy, a policy unscrupulous in method but peaceful in its aims, may eventually prevail. For although when the war broke out Count Berchtold was Minister for Foreign Affairs in Austria, yet he had been obliged to waive his own policy in favour of Franz Ferdinand, who was nothing but the puppet of the Emperor William and the Vatican. During the months which elapsed between Franz Ferdinand's death and the outbreak of hostilities, Count Berchtold had no time to change these destructive plans, but no doubt my readers will remember the report of the British Ambassador, Sir Maurice de Bunsen, in which he described the courtesy with which Count Berchtold had treated him and contrasted his conduct with that of Count Tschirsky, the German ambassador at Vienna. It is not difficult to guess what Count Berchtold's real feelings were, though he was forced to conceal them at that moment. I have no hesitation in asserting that his

politics are anti-Prussian and pro-Ally ; his comparatively rapid retirement from his post in the Foreign Office is undoubtedly a confirmation of my belief. His advice to the new heir will be to form fresh alliances which will certainly not embrace either Germany or Turkey.

But although the right man happens to have been chosen as pilot for the moment, there is no great cause for congratulation ; he may be overthrown any day by the intrigues of an opposing faction. For such is the pitiful state of affairs that the government is in the hands of a Camarilla itself divided into camps, which have no desire to pull together for the sake of their country, but are entirely ruled by the interests of faction and self.

It might be argued that it does not much matter whether a State is torn asunder by party quarrels or by the quarrels of a Camarilla, but alas ! the real difference is only too apparent in Austria, for the parties in the Camarilla will shrink from nothing. I have heard here in this country very biting comments made upon the members of our English

Cabinet, yet it would be impossible for any sane person to harbour for a moment the idea that one member of the Government would ever be likely to rid himself of another by slow poison, however bitter and antagonistic his feeling might be. Mr. Asquith's personal safety is not threatened in spite of the virulent hostility of the Northcliffe press, but I doubt if he would suffer merely from influenza and chills were he Prime Minister of Austria-Hungary ! His recovery might be hampered by a mysterious blood-poisoning as happened in the case of Count Æhrenthal. Besides, in England the leaders of the nation are, after all, chosen by the nation, and if the British people are dissatisfied they have therefore only themselves to thank. In Austria there is at the head of affairs a generation of aristocratic intriguers who have managed to keep their fingers constantly in the political pie, and it is these few people who form that frightful invisible power which, like the canker in an apple, is gradually undermining the health of the whole monarchy.

I know this so well from my own experi-

ence that I cannot help mentioning my personal affairs at this point. In 1911 I tried to obtain my rights as Archduchess ; I found myself up against a wall formed by a few individuals who stood like sentinels round the throne of my imperial father. It was not to their interest or advantage that I should gain his ear. In my case the wall consisted of Count Æhrenthal, Prince Montenuovo, and Count Zichy, who had all resolved that I should not be heard. They were the faction of Archduchess Valerie my sister, Archduke Karl Franz Josef, and others. Opposed to their faction was that of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife the Duchess of Hohenberg, including such important members of the Court as Baron Runerskirchen and many high ecclesiastical and military people. I did not bring my cause before them, but I am almost certain that I should have been just as unsuccessful had I done so ; it is not likely that my success in obtaining justice would have been any particular benefit to them. If Franz Ferdinand would have gained anything by helping me he would have

done so, and enjoyed fighting the other faction, but as his interest in suppressing my claim was equally strong with that of his opponents I had no chance with either party.

This little incident would hardly be worth mentioning, but that it does show how difficult it is in Austria to obtain a hearing. What happened to my claim takes place also in matters of national importance; no one can ever reckon upon the actions of the opposition.

The Emperor himself is the chief victim of these intriguers. He really has very little to say in public affairs, but his councillors conceal the fact of his impotence from him. Unwittingly he carries out the wishes of the party in power for the moment, who keep him in ignorance of anything they prefer he should not know, or so dish up the truth that he is never informed of the actual state of affairs.

The imperial family are more or less aware of all these intrigues and are consequently the prey to an unconquerable *méfiance*. They are suspicious of every one who comes near them, and they are really not answerable for this attitude. It would take too long to

write a history of Hapsburg intrigues, but the ruthlessness with which, for instance, the King of Rome, Napoleon's only son, was harried to his end, and the unscrupulousness with which his mother, the Empress Marie-Louise, was ruined by Prince Metternich (who even intercepted her correspondence with her husband, to whom she was genuinely attached), are notable examples. Well known are the methods employed by the Archduchess Sophie, the mother of the present Emperor, whereby she caused the Emperor Ferdinand to be dethroned and obtained the imperial sceptre for her son. The Crown Prince Rudolf was a victim to the same kind of machinations, and the intrigues which barely two years ago brought about the present condition of Austria-Hungary are fresh in the memory.

These facts must prove to all reasonable people that the Hapsburg rulers have reigned too long ; it is time for them to relinquish the Crown, for Austria must hope in vain for better things unless she has at her head a man strong enough to root out all these

poisonous weeds, to tear down for ever these parasites whose treacherous embraces have sapped the erstwhile mighty strength of the ancient Empire. I have the boldness to ask, "Is Karl Franz Josef such a man?" The whole of Austria-Hungary must reply to me with an emphatic "No." His page in the book of history is still white, but to place any confidence in him is to shut one's eyes to the lessons of the past. He was brought up under the crushing Hapsburg tradition and any natural gifts he may have possessed must long ago have been destroyed.

All my life I have congratulated myself that Destiny has made me a woman. Until this war broke out I had never wished to change my sex, but then I realised bitterly that I was suffering from the handicap imposed for generations upon my sisters, a handicap which will exist so long as humanity refuses to recognise that a woman can be the equal of a man.



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